

ROLPH

Henry  
Wise  
Wood

OF  
ALBERTA

Henry Wise Wood

HD  
1790  
A3  
W8  
C.19

HSS

UNIVERSITY  
OF TORONTO  
PRESS

Rutherford Library, University of  
Alberta.

This copy of the Biography  
of the late Dr. Henry Wise Wood  
is being presented to you  
with the compliments of the  
Alberta Wheat Pool, Calgary, Alta.

**Ex LIBRIS**  
**UNIVERSITATIS**  
**ALBERTAENSIS**





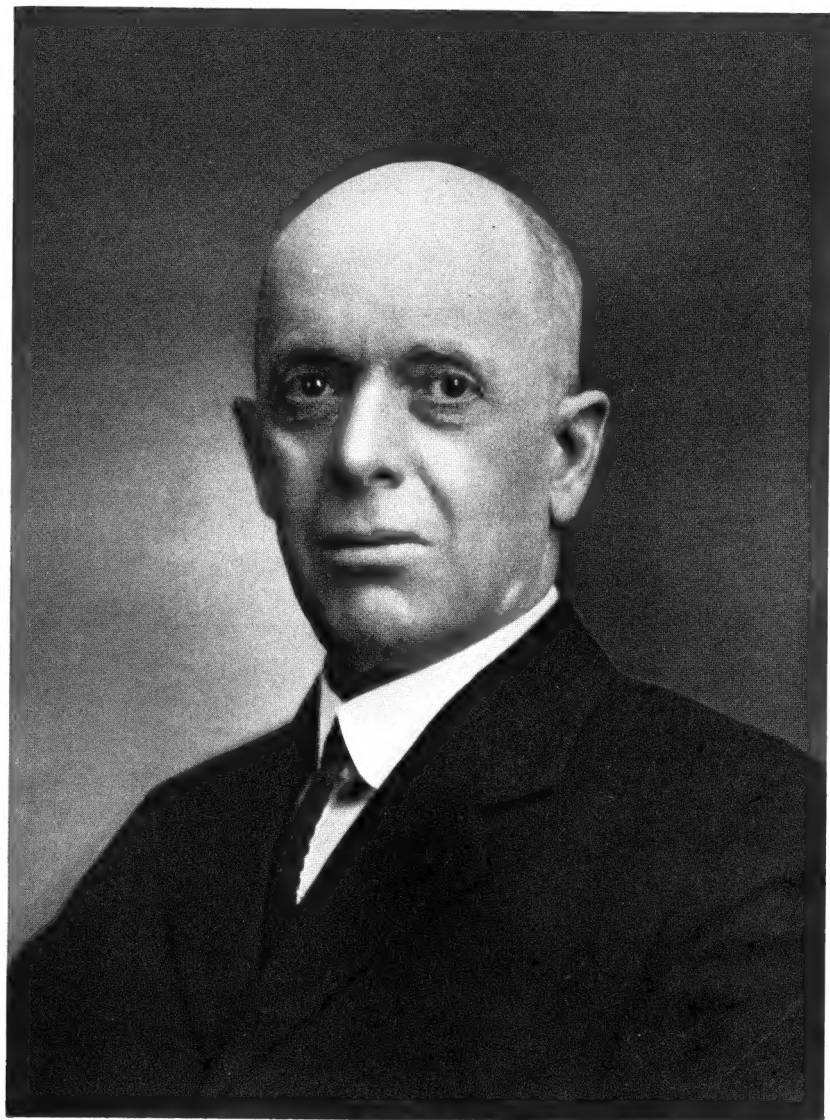




**HENRY WISE WOOD OF ALBERTA**







HENRY WISE WOOD  
1860-1941

*Gifted*  
WILLIAM KIRBY ROLPH

HD

1790

A3W8

C.10

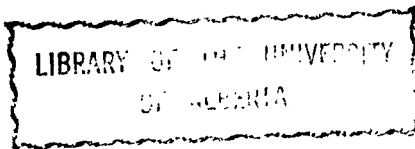
*Henry Wise Wood*

OF ALBERTA

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS : 1950

*Copyright, Canada, 1950*  
*University of Toronto Press*  
*Printed in Canada*

*London: Geoffrey Cumberlege*  
*Oxford University Press*



TO RUTH





## PREFACE

HISTORIANS in recent years have been much interested in the continental character of many of the trends in the history of Canada and the United States. Nowhere have the elements common to both countries been more strikingly manifested than in the development of the great plains region. North and south of the 49th Parallel farmers faced very similar problems, and pursued similar methods in searching for solutions. Ideas, methods of organization, and people crossed the border with typical western disregard of artificial barriers. These common developments became especially apparent in the twentieth century because of the influx into the Prairie Provinces of American farmers who brought with them the knowledge gained from the failure of the Populist Crusade and other similar movements. Despite the very great similarities between the American West and the Canadian Prairie Provinces, however, there were also important differences which add to the interest of any study touching the history of the two countries. The large infusion of settlers from Eastern Canada and direct from the British Isles, the Canadian national and provincial parliamentary systems and the organization and background of Canadian political parties, all helped to create a climate of attitudes and opinions different from that south of the border.

This book is an account of one of the American settlers who came to the Canadian West—Henry Wise Wood. Wood had grown up in Missouri and had witnessed the rise and decline of the Farmers' Alliance in that state. He was greatly influenced by this experience and his Canadian career shows how he attempted to apply its lessons to the solution of the problems of the Canadian wheat grower. With remarkable skill and insight Wood adapted himself to his new environment so like and yet so different from that with which he had been familiar. For twenty years he was recognized as the most powerful and influential figure in the farmers' movement in Alberta and as one of the

outstanding leaders of the Canadian agrarian movement. He was largely instrumental in destroying the hold of the old-line political parties over the farmers of the province, and he played a decisive part in the establishment of the Alberta Wheat Pool and the Central Selling Agency of the Canadian Wheat Producers, Limited.

The material for this biography was drawn largely from the manuscript collection of newspaper clippings, memoranda, and letters in the possession of the Alberta Wheat Pool, the Western Canadian farm journals, and the daily newspapers of Calgary, Edmonton, and Winnipeg for the years when Wood was at the height of his influence. In addition, much useful information was acquired from personal interviews with a number of prominent political and co-operative leaders who knew Wood personally and had worked with him in the farmers' movement.

Among the many who have given me invaluable assistance and to whom I wish to express my thanks are the staffs of the Alberta Legislative Library, the Calgary Public Library, the Manitoba Legislative Library, the Library of the University of Western Ontario, and the American History Division of the New York Public Library. My sincere appreciation goes also to Professor James B. Hedges, Brown University; Professor F. H. Underhill and Professor George W. Brown, University of Toronto; and Professor K. W. K. McNaught, United College, University of Manitoba, who read the manuscript in whole or in part and from whom I received many valuable criticisms and suggestions. I am especially grateful to the officials of the Canadian and Alberta Wheat Pools for their co-operation with and encouragement of my researches and for their many and helpful suggestions. In particular, I am indebted to Mr. R. D. Purdy, Mr. R. O. German, and Mr. L. D. Nesbitt of the Alberta Wheat Pool, and Mr. W. A. Macleod of the Canadian Wheat Producers, Limited.

I wish also to express my grateful acknowledgement of the helpfulness and kindness of Mr. Wood's sons, John, Rex, and Ray Wood, and his brother, John S. Wood. Finally, my sincere thanks go to Miss Mary E. Smith and to my wife who have given generously of their time and energy in the preparation of this manuscript.

W. K. R.

# CONTENTS

PREFACE	vii
I Wood of Alberta	3
II The Setting	18
III Origin of the Agrarian Revolt in Alberta	36
IV The Die Is Cast	61
V Wood and the Progressive Party, 1921-5	92
VI The Wheat Marketing Problem	120
VII Establishment of the Wheat Pool	139
VIII "Uncrowned King of Alberta"	170
IX The Wheat Pool Crisis	193
X "Hail to the Chief"	209
BIBLIOGRAPHY	221
INDEX	227



# ILLUSTRATIONS

Henry Wise Wood	<i>frontispiece</i>
Farm scene near Calgary, Alberta	<i>opposite</i> 32
Alberta Wheat Pool elevator at Ferintosh (near Camrose, Alberta)	<i>opposite</i> 52
Alberta Pool Terminal, No. 1, Vancouver, B.C.	<i>opposite</i> 84



**HENRY WISE WOOD OF ALBERTA**





## *Chapter One*

# WOOD OF ALBERTA

ON JANUARY 22, 1930, in the War Memorial Hall, Calgary, hundreds of farm men and women assembled to pay tribute to the man who, for fifteen years, had been the spokesman of the agrarian movement in Alberta. "The proceedings are about to begin. A few figures familiar to the assembly begin to walk down the aisles to the platform. A scattered volley of handclaps arises. Presently a grey-clad figure, tall and lean, the sparse hair of his forward-thrust head quite grey, comes toward the front, hands deep in the pockets of his coat. The hand-clapping becomes a crescendo. It becomes a fortissimo as he goes behind the scenes and emerges on the platform. H. W. Wood has arrived."<sup>1</sup> This applause was for the man who had become the most striking personality in the Canadian farmers' movement. Since 1916 he had been president of the United Farmers of Alberta and he had headed the Alberta Wheat Pool from its inception in 1923. During these years his influence over both the political and economic aspects of the provincial farmers' movement was unrivalled. No matter how much his opponents might criticize his actions, call him a dictator, an "alien demagogue," and refer to his gospel of co-operation as "weird," his hold on the affections of rural Alberta remained unshaken. The farmers recognized that to Wood their interests came first and his personal desires second. Because he had confidence in them they gave him their loyalty and trust. This was the secret of his ascendancy in the province.

Nor was his power restricted to the provincial scene. As a member and sometime president of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, he had played an outstanding role in the formation

<sup>1</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1930, p. 9.

of its policies in regard to political and economic affairs. He was one of the leaders of the Progressive movement and had taken an active part in securing the great Progressive triumph of 1921. Within the party he was the leading opponent of the fusion of the Liberal and Progressive parties and his influence was largely responsible for the survival of an independent farmers' political party in Alberta. He had served as a member of the Board of Grain Supervisors and of the Canadian Wheat Board. As a result of his services in establishing the pool method of marketing wheat, he became vice-president of the Central Selling Agency of the Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited where he played a considerable part in the development of the marketing policies of the Canadian Wheat Pool.

More than any other agrarian leader, Wood typified the emotional fervour which was such an important ingredient of the Canadian farmers' movement. His tall, thin figure; his exceptionally long legs; his deep-set brown eyes which seemed to flash fire when he was aroused; his gentle and kindly mouth, all combined to suggest a Canadian Abraham Lincoln, with whom he was often compared. His majestic physical appearance was aided by the high forehead which accentuated his height and his bald head, completely bare except for a fringe of grey hair about his temples. The sincerity and determination of his expression reflected the loyalty to his principles, regardless of any personal considerations, that was one of Wood's outstanding traits. Because of his tremendous personal magnetism, he had the ability to attract and hold the confidence not only of the farmers, but of many other people who were brought into close contact with him through the Wheat Pool and the U.F.A. organizations. Everyone recognized his complete selflessness where the interests of the grain growers were concerned.

His influence among the farmers was considerably strengthened by his penetrating insight into political and economic questions and his success in handling either a farmers' convention or an executive meeting of the Alberta Wheat Pool. His matter-of-fact style of oratory combined with a considerable gift for good-humoured repartee proved an ideal combination for handling the often unruly local and provincial agrarian meetings. He seldom

spoke from notes and his formal speeches were generally short and to the point. His U.F.A. presidential addresses were usually sermons pointing out the correct road for the organization to follow and the pitfalls to be avoided on the way. (The fact that they were often given from a church pulpit emphasized their prophetic character.) Often he turned over the running of these conventions to one or more of the leading members of the U.F.A. while he retired to the basement of the church for a smoke and a chat with a few old friends. However, if the convention seemed inclined to deviate from the position he had outlined in his presidential message, "H. W." would appear. Slowly he would make his way to the stage of the auditorium or to the pulpit, and mount the steps. Then in a few words, punctuated with jabs from his pipe, he would point out the errors in their proposed action. This intimation from "The Chief" was usually sufficient and the offending resolution would be rejected.

Although Wood's formal education was modest, his language was simple, clear, and direct. He read the Bible extensively and his speech was full of biblical references and phraseology. He was fond of English and American nineteenth-century writers, particularly Dickens, Burns, Poe, and Emerson, and many of his speeches contain the rolling, sonorous phrases beloved of nineteenth-century orators and writers.<sup>2</sup> In addition, he was an avid reader of the dictionary and by this means he expanded his vocabulary. He was seldom eloquent, yet when he was deeply moved he could sway the most hostile audience. His clarity and aptness of expression, his innocent profanity and coarseness, the earthiness of his illustrations, all combined to give him an irresistible appeal. Of Aaron Sapiro, the brilliant advocate of the Wheat Pool, people said: "My, what a clever man!" Of H. W. Wood, they said: "My, what a wise man!"<sup>3</sup>

Wood was a person of simple tastes. He never took a drink and his chief recreations were playing rummy and attending an occasional motion picture, frequently a "western." McPhail records how, after a long argument over selling policy among the members of the Central Selling Agency, he and Wood went to see a film,

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Rex Wood, Aug. 12, 1948.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with W. A. MacLeod, Sept. 4, 1948.

*Dick Turpin*.<sup>4</sup> Brownlee tried to get him interested in playing golf and told him it would prevent constipation. Wood replied: "Well, Brownlee, if I want to achieve that result all I have to do is think about golf."<sup>5</sup> He had no desire to amass a great personal fortune. At a time when other farm leaders were getting \$20,000 and more a year, Wood was content to accept a modest \$2,000 as head of the U.F.A. When Wood became president of the Alberta Wheat Pool in 1923 he refused to accept any further salary from the U.F.A.<sup>6</sup> He had little interest in dress; he never owned any formal clothes until he went to Japan in 1926. When he had to dress up in academic robes to receive his honorary degree of doctor of laws, he remarked that "it was like putting a silver-mounted harness on a Missouri mule."<sup>7</sup>

The most notable aspect of Wood's character was caution towards new ideas. He was afraid that the farmers might be carried away by enthusiasm for an attractive-sounding idea the consequences of which might be disastrous for their future welfare. "This over-enthusiastic spirit doesn't last, you know. Enthusiasm is a good thing so long as you don't overdo it."<sup>8</sup> At times his slowness annoyed the more radical and adventurous element, but his invariable reply was that "we have lots of time to make everything but mistakes."<sup>9</sup> He thought of progress, not in terms of the life-span of a single individual, but in terms of centuries, and he did not expect to accomplish a complete agrarian reformation in the course of his own life-time. One individual could not expect to set the world on fire, because it was "too green to burn."<sup>10</sup> As long as he was head of the provincial agrarian movement, radical proposals for new and adventurous activities, which might wreck the organization, received no encouragement.

Wood's greatness lay in his simplicity and his integrity. However much other members of the U.F.A. might disagree with his

<sup>4</sup>Harold A. Innis (ed.), *The Diary of Alexander James McPhail* (Toronto, 1940), p. 119.

<sup>5</sup>Interview with Lew Hutchinson, Aug. 14, 1948.

<sup>6</sup>Letter of W. D. Trego, *High River Times*, July 10, 1941.

<sup>7</sup>Interview with W. A. MacLeod, Sept. 4, 1948.

<sup>8</sup>Clipping from the *Winnipeg Tribune*, Sept. 4, 1925, in Henry Wise Wood Papers, Alberta Wheat Pool, Calgary.

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Lew Hutchinson, Aug. 14, 1948.

<sup>10</sup>Interview with R. O. German, Aug. 10, 1948.

stand on any question, all knew that it was motivated by no selfish considerations; his favourite text was "He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant." Like Lincoln, he believed that government of the people was preferable to government for the people and he devoted much of his efforts to creating a real spirit of democracy among the farmers. He did not regard himself as the leader of the organized grain growers in the province but as their spokesman, and his constant endeavour was to leave to the farmers the responsibility for making decisions and determining the course of action. As long as he was its director, the agrarian movement remained under the control of the members as a whole and escaped that domination by a small clique which proved so ruinous to the movement in other provinces. The political and economic achievements of the organized farmers of Alberta bore witness to the soundness of his ideas and to the success of his methods.

Wood was a product of that sturdy, southern-upland stock which contributed so much to the growth of the United States. He was born in Ralls County, Missouri, on May 31, 1860, on a farm near Monroe City, the fifth child of John Oliver Wood and Elizabeth Broadley Wood, and he was named after Henry Wise, the famous Virginia governor.<sup>11</sup> His father had been born in 1821 at Spartanburg, South Carolina, in the heart of the Piedmont country. In 1827 his family had joined the westward migration from that region and had moved first to New London, Missouri, and then to Indian Creek. There John Oliver Wood had grown up and established himself as a successful farmer and cattle breeder. In 1849 he had married Elizabeth Boardman Broadley who had been born in Fulton, Missouri, on July 12, 1831. By the time young Henry arrived John Wood was a prosperous yeoman farmer owning nearly 1,000 acres which he operated with the help of a few slaves.<sup>12</sup>

Like her husband, Elizabeth Broadley Wood was the descendant of a long-established American family. Her maternal grandmother, Sarah Honeyman, had been born in New Jersey in 1768 and her maternal grandfather, Conrad Yeater, in Pennsylvania in

<sup>11</sup>Biographical sketch in the Wood Papers.

<sup>12</sup>Letter to the author from John O. Wood, June 30, 1949; biographical sketch in the Wood Papers.

1769. They had been married in Virginia and then moved to Mount Sterling, Bourbon County, Kentucky, where Catherine Yeater, Henry's grandmother, was born in 1806. From Kentucky the family moved to Camp Branch in the then St. Charles County, Missouri, where Catherine Yeater met and married Nicholas Broadley in 1828.<sup>13</sup> Wood's family background, therefore, was typical of the prosperous white yeoman farmer class of the antebellum south to which his parents belonged.

The Civil War found Wood's father, as a slave-holder and a South Carolinian, on the side of secession, and he joined the Confederate forces, leaving his farm in charge of his wife. Northern Missouri was largely Union in sympathy and John Wood's action brought him into considerable local disfavour. Once when he was hiding out in some woods near his farm in order to visit his wife and family, neighbours in the near-by town of Hannibal learned of his presence. They told the Union commander and a squad of soldiers was sent to capture him. When they couldn't find him, they seized "Old Till," one of his slaves, and strung her up to a limb of a tree to get her to tell where her master was. "Old Till" did not know, but she did know that another slave, Warwick Duncan, did. However, all she would say was that the master had "gone to Kentucky." After stringing her up three times and receiving the same answer each time, the soldiers gave up and left empty-handed. The loyalty of "Old Till" and the trust imposed in Warwick Duncan show that John Wood was well liked by his slaves. Wood remarked long afterwards that even after his emancipation Warwick Duncan remained a faithful servant of the Wood family. Shortly after the "Old Till" episode a detachment of Union soldiers was stationed at the Wood farm and one of Wood's earliest recollections was the presence of these blue-coated men in his home. He often used to relate how the first apple he ever had was given to him by one of these soldiers.<sup>14</sup>

John Wood's loyalty to the South seems to have caused him little financial loss. At the conclusion of the war he returned to his farm and resumed his agricultural activities devoting much of his efforts to raising cattle and mules for which there was a

<sup>13</sup>Letter to the author from John O. Wood, Dec. 31, 1948.

<sup>14</sup>Statement of Henry Wise Wood in the Wood Papers.

good market in the post-Civil War period. During the late sixties he extended his operations and joined with one of his sons to acquire a cattle ranch in Throckmorton County, Texas.<sup>15</sup> Unlike many other southerners, John Wood and his family emerged from the war with their economic position practically unchanged.

As the son of a prosperous and successful farmer Wood received a better education than was the usual lot of a farmer's son in the sixties and seventies of the last century. After a few years at a rural school he was sent to a private school in Monroe City and later for two years to Chrisian University, now Culver-Stockton College, at Canton, Missouri. While in college he met and fell in love with Etta Leora Cook whom he married in 1883 at the end of his second year there.<sup>16</sup> Marriage and its attendant responsibilities ended Wood's formal education, but he retained an interest in literature and philosophy which he never lost. Throughout his life he remained fond of poetry, especially lyric poetry, and he developed a considerable appreciation for Walt Whitman, Sidney Lanier, and the lyric portions of Tennyson. He possessed, too, an inquiring mind and a diligent desire to master those subjects which aroused his interest. He read widely, not only on agricultural questions, but on such diverse subjects as Chinese philosophy and the geology of Alberta.<sup>17</sup> Education combined with his extensive reading and habits of quiet thought helped him materially to formulate the half-understood aspirations of the farmers into an understandable philosophy of co-operation and political action.

In the formation of his character and ideals Wood's early religious training played an important part. He was a member of the Campbellite Church, the Disciples of Christ, in which he was an active worker from his youth and he taught a men's Bible class in the Christian church in Monroe City.<sup>18</sup> It was from the teachings of this church that he derived much of his belief in the social message of Christianity, particularly the Gospel of St. John. The Campbellites believed that the basic element of the

<sup>15</sup>Biographical sketch in the Wood Papers.

<sup>16</sup>Memoranda of John S. Wood, Feb. 18, 1947, and Aug. 4, 1949, in the Wood Papers.

<sup>17</sup>Interview with Rex Wood, Aug. 12, 1948.

<sup>18</sup>Letter of C. O. Mayes, June 8, 1948, in the Wood Papers.

Christian religion was "faith in the character and teachings of Jesus," and the New Testament was the only "proper guide for Christians." Instead of the interest in dogma and organization characteristic of other Christian churches, the Campbellites placed their emphasis on fellowship and following the way of life advocated by Jesus. "The one truth of central importance is the Messiahship of Jesus and the sufficient evidence of a saving faith is assent to this proposition." It was characteristic of the frontier spirit of this religion that services could be conducted by laymen as well as ministers and that women were accorded the same privileges as men in this regard.<sup>19</sup> The democratic nature of the teachings and organization of this church greatly influenced Wood and added an important ingredient to his social and political philosophy.

Wood's experiences as a cattle breeder and farmer in Missouri during the turbulent years of the 1880's and 1890's also had an important part in shaping his ideas. From his youth he showed a marked ability to handle horses and the balky, cantankerous mules for which the state was so famous. When he was fourteen he overheard his father say, "I have 300 men on this place [*sic*] but no teamster like Henry." Wood commented that "after hearing what my father said then, I was always more confident in his judgment."<sup>20</sup> When he was eighteen, he and another boy drove a team of two-year-old mules from Missouri to the family ranch in Texas. Since in 1878 much of the territory through which they went was still subject to Indian raids, the fact that his father would allow him to undertake this journey was a good illustration of the confidence his father had in the courage and self-reliance of young Henry.<sup>21</sup> During his three years in Texas Wood worked as a cowboy and also clerked in a drug store. He developed a great fondness for cattle ranching and when he returned to Missouri in 1881 continued his interest in raising cattle and became one of the leading Hereford breeders in northern Missouri. After his marriage he took over the management of the family farm from his father and soon had it stocked with nearly 400 head

<sup>19</sup>E. S. Ames, *The Disciples of Christ* (Chicago, n.d.), pp. 4-7.

<sup>20</sup>Statement of Henry Wise Wood in the Wood Papers.

<sup>21</sup>Biographical sketch in the Wood Papers.



of Hereford cattle. These cattle he bought and sold all over the eastern United States. It was while returning from a purchasing trip to Maine that Wood paid his first visit to Canada, but unfortunately he left no record of his impressions of the country which was to be the scene of his greatest triumphs.<sup>22</sup>

In this period Wood's career was that of a successful Missouri farmer and cattleman and there was little indication of the great role he was to play in later life. He was active in his church; he joined the Ralls County local of the Farmers and Laborers Union; he became a Free Mason. He was so well liked and respected that he was offered, but refused, the Democratic nomination for the State Legislature. He showed little interest in politics and the only election in which he took an active part was the Bryan campaign of 1896. Like most western Democrats, he favoured Bryan, and he made a number of speeches throughout Ralls County supporting Bryan's candidature.<sup>23</sup> He continued to read widely on economic and political questions. By 1891 he was reading Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and the political and economic treatises of John Stuart Mill.<sup>24</sup> In addition, he was already displaying his talent as an agrarian organizer, for he successfully established a mutual telephone company to compete against the Bell Telephone Company, in an attempt to force the latter to give the farmers the service and rates which they considered adequate and reasonable. So successful was Wood's company that Bell took it over and gave the farmers the rates they had originally demanded.<sup>25</sup>

Although Wood took no active part in the political aspects of the Alliance and Populist movements, he followed closely the development of the farmers' movement in Missouri and much of his later hostility to agrarian political action was the result of experiences in this period. His brother, James Perry Wood, failed to receive the Democratic nomination to Congress because of an agreement between the other two candidates to settle the nomination by tossing a coin, the loser to withdraw and support the other, and Wood's views on politics were deeply affected.<sup>26</sup> He

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>Letter of Judge W. T. Ragland, Jan. 14, 1947, in the Wood Papers.

<sup>24</sup>Letter of John S. Wood, Feb. 17, 1947, in the Wood Papers.

<sup>25</sup>Letter of Judge W. T. Ragland, Jan. 14, 1947, in the Wood Papers.

<sup>26</sup>Memorandum of John S. Wood, Aug. 4, 1949, in the Wood Papers.

attributed his brother's failure to the unscrupulousness of professional politicians and he became convinced that the worst thing that could happen to a farmers' organization was for it to enter politics.<sup>27</sup> This feeling was increased by the career of Uriel S. Hall, who became head of the Farmers' Alliance in Missouri in 1890 and was elected as an agrarian Democrat to the House of Representatives in 1892. Hall was the most influential figure in the Missouri farmers' movement and a person whose ideas Wood much admired. He was a man of education and culture who sought to direct the agrarian organization through discussion and reasoned argument rather than wild harangues. His belief that the farmers should exercise their influence as an independent political group appealed greatly to Wood who incorporated some of Hall's methods into the Alberta farmers' movement, including the use of local discussions on prepared topics and the controlling of state politics through the selection of candidates pledged in writing to support the farmers' demands.<sup>28</sup> In Congress, however, Hall abandoned the farmers' cause and became a staunch supporter of President Cleveland and the latter's anti-agrarian policy on free silver.<sup>29</sup> Wood felt Hall's desertion keenly and this, combined with the failure of the Farmers' Alliance to maintain any effective state organization because of internal quarrels over politics, long coloured Wood's attitude towards farmers in politics. When the movement for agrarian political action developed on the Prairies he fought it because, as he told Nesbitt, "the thing I feared most was the organization going into politics. I kept it out as long as I could."<sup>30</sup> When it was clear that the U.F.A. was determined to try political action, Wood gave way and devoted his efforts to preventing the Alberta farmers from committing those mistakes which had ruined the agrarian movement in Missouri.

After 1900 Wood became dissatisfied with living in Missouri and managing his father's farm. He wanted a farm of his own to

<sup>27</sup>Interview with L. D. Nesbitt, July 16, 1948.

<sup>28</sup>For a fuller discussion of the Farmers' Alliance movement in Missouri and of the role of U.S. Hall see Homer Clevenger, "Missouri Becomes a Doubtful State," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 1942-3, pp. 541-56; "Farmers' Alliance in Missouri," *Missouri Historical Review*, 1944-5, pp. 24-44.

<sup>29</sup>Paul F. Sharp, *The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada* (Minneapolis, 1948), p. 146.

<sup>30</sup>Interview with L. D. Nesbitt, July 16, 1948.

leave to his family as he was now in his forties, a married man with four sons, anxious to secure his family's future. Land values had risen so sharply in Missouri that it was out of the question for him to buy a farm there. At this time a man who had fought Indians in Montana and Alberta told Wood of the great ranching possibilities of the new territory being opened up in the Canadian West. Wood's interest was aroused; in the fall of 1904 he visited the new territory and his interest in it was confirmed. He learned, too, that a number of his neighbours were planning to try their fortune on this new agricultural frontier. This settled the question. In the fall of 1905 he established himself and his family on a section of land which he had bought from Walter Scott, at Carstairs, near the city of Calgary.<sup>81</sup>

Although Alberta had just been admitted as a province it was still largely unsettled. Near the new Wood home ran an Indian trail and in these early days the Wood children were accustomed to see large groups of Indians with their horses and family possessions moving up and down it with the seasons.<sup>82</sup> Wood devoted his efforts to making a home for his family in this new land. He abandoned his idea of starting a cattle ranch and bent his energies to developing a typical western wheat farm. He enjoyed moderate success, and soon became a respected and prominent figure in the Carstairs district.

Wood continued his interest in farm organizations and became a member of the Canadian Society of Equity when a branch of that organization was established in his community. When the Society attempted to improve the conditions of the farmer through co-operative economic enterprises Wood became one of its first shareholders. Unfortunately, the Society was more ambitious than practical and its economic activities soon ended in bankruptcy. An incompetent or dishonest liquidator was appointed who failed to settle the muddled situation. Eventually fresh action had to be taken and Wood was one of the inspectors appointed by the shareholders to protect their interests. In the end each shareholder was held liable for \$7.50 of his \$10.00 share.<sup>83</sup> Wood's

<sup>81</sup>Interviews with John O. Wood, July 18, 1948, and Rex Wood, Aug. 12, 1948.

<sup>82</sup>Interview with John O. Wood, July 18, 1948.

<sup>83</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, March 18, 1914, p. 14.

experience with the Society of Equity made him chary of supporting economic enterprises conducted by farmers and helped reinforce his natural conservatism toward such enterprises.

When the Canadian Society of Equity amalgamated with the Alberta Farmers' Association in 1909, Wood became a member of the new organization.<sup>34</sup> In 1911 he attended his first United Farmers of Alberta convention as a delegate from the Carstairs local.<sup>35</sup> In the same year, during the Reciprocity campaign, he made his first venture into Canadian politics; he had become a Canadian citizen that year and he celebrated this event by working for the election of the Liberal candidate against R. B. Bennett in Calgary West.<sup>36</sup> Although his first political venture was unsuccessful it showed clearly that Wood was deeply interested in the solution of the political and economic problems of this new land.

The next few years were important for the future career of Henry Wise Wood. He became increasingly interested in how best to make the farmers' voice effective in economic and political affairs. Night after night neighbours returning home late would see a light burning in the Wood home.<sup>37</sup> He began to read deeply in the literature of economic and social reform, including the novels of Frank Norris and the philosophical writings of Karl Marx. The former made a considerable impression on him, but Marx's views about perpetual class war were alien to Wood's philosophy of social co-operation and he rejected them. Gradually he evolved his theory of group co-operation and organization. In 1912 he won first prize (\$10) in an advertisement writing contest sponsored by the Grain Growers' Grain Company. His advertisement emphasized the need for and value of organization as the only way for the farmers to protect themselves against the "organized band of commercial pirates." He told them that "you have the strength. What you need is the magic touch of the hand of union to build you into one powerful working machine!"<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup>For discussion of the early history of the organized farmers in Alberta see *infra*, chap. II, pp. 33-5.

<sup>35</sup>Article by Norman Lambert, *Farmers' Magazine* (n.d., 1917) in the Wood Papers.

<sup>36</sup>Interview with John O. Wood, July 18, 1948.

<sup>37</sup>Statement of Levi Bone, *Western Farm Leader*, June 20, 1941.

<sup>38</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 9, 1912, pp. 12, 13.

Wood's belief in the virtue of organization and his constant advocacy of this idea among the farmers gradually won him more than local recognition. In 1914 he was elected a district director of the U.F.A.<sup>39</sup> As a director he conscientiously fulfilled his duty to visit the different locals in his district. Throughout the summer of 1914 he made an extensive public tour and spoke in every part of his district.<sup>40</sup> This was the day of the country meeting when local schools and assembly halls were the gathering places of the farmers of the neighbouring countryside. Before these small groups Wood was extremely effective and he began to attain that personal ascendancy over the farming population of the province which proved so valuable to him later. This year, too, he had his first contact with a problem which was to agitate Alberta politics for the next thirty years, when he served as a member of a committee to investigate the relations between the banks and agriculture.<sup>41</sup>

The year 1915 was an important one in Wood's life. After being defeated for the presidency by James Speakman, he was elected vice-president.<sup>42</sup> He continued his efforts to improve the strength of the U.F.A. organization and at the same time made himself a more familiar figure to Alberta's farmers. The importance of these activities became clear when James Speakman died suddenly from pneumonia and Wood became acting head of the U.F.A.<sup>43</sup> At the 1916 annual meeting Wood was confirmed in his new position when he was elected president by a clear majority over his two opponents—Rice Sheppard and A. S. Roddle.<sup>44</sup> This year, too, witnessed his second unsuccessful venture into politics when he was defeated for the Liberal nomination in Calgary West. When he attended the nominating convention of the Calgary West Liberal Association as a little-known delegate from Carstairs, Wood's name was placed in nomination by his farmer friends and his speech in support of his candidacy created a sensation. It took all the skill of the Liberal organizer to keep the convention in line for the organization candidate, E. H. Riley. The latter was

<sup>39</sup>United Farmers of Alberta, *Annual Report*, 1916 (Calgary, 1916) p. 6.

<sup>40</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 15, 1914, p. 10; *ibid.*, Aug. 12, 1914, p. 14.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1914, p. 13.

<sup>42</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 21, 1915.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1915.

<sup>44</sup>United Farmers of Alberta, *Annual Report*, 1916, pp. 77-9.

chosen but only by the close vote of 33-25.<sup>45</sup> The narrowness of the vote shows that with a little advance preparation Wood might very well have received the nomination. The effect that this would have had on the future course of agrarian politics is an interesting subject for speculation.

Throughout his first year as president of the U.F.A., Wood's activities were confined principally to publicizing the economic difficulties of the farmers in comparison with those of the rest of the community. His two most important public speeches dealt with the need for improvement in rural credit facilities and for increasing the return that farmers got from their own production. In a speech before the Edmonton Board of Trade he declared that the heavy interest burden borne by the farmer was a serious economic handicap. He wanted some system of long-term loans at reasonable interest rates which would free the wheat grower from the bondage of the local storekeeper. He asserted that the latter sometimes charged between 20 and 40 per cent interest on these store loans. In order to encourage prompt payment he favoured a reduction in interest rates on those who met their obligations when due.<sup>46</sup> He also spoke at a conference on problems of rural life where he advocated closer co-operation among economic classes and that the farmers should get a higher return for their labour.<sup>47</sup> It is apparent from these speeches that Wood's interest was concentrated on economic reforms through co-operative action and he was only moderately interested in the political fever which was already present in much of the West.

The esteem in which Wood was held by the farmers was illustrated in the spring of 1916 when he and F. M. Black of the Calgary Board of Trade successfully mediated a dispute between the farmers and the Canadian Pacific Railway on a C. P. R. irrigation block east of Calgary. The farmers had confidence in his honesty and fairness and were willing to abide by his decision.<sup>48</sup> It was this feeling which largely accounted for the hold that Wood had attained on rural Alberta. Under his direction the United Farmers of Alberta became the most important association in the

<sup>45</sup>*Calgary Herald*, April 17, 1915.

<sup>46</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, April 26, 1916.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 11, 1916.

<sup>48</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 24, 1916, p. 15.

province. He had early realized that the extent of the influence of the farmers depended on the strength of their organization. He felt that "a man acting as an individual can only put the strength of an individual behind his ideas and opinions. While we wish to develop the full strength of our farmers as a class, we hope that organization will develop among all classes until all of society will be thoroughly organized. In organization and organization alone is there strength. When not properly organized, 95 per cent of the people are easily governed by 5 per cent. We must become thoroughly organized and train our leaders before we are prepared for real democracy."<sup>49</sup> To attain this ideal Wood largely subordinated his life and personal welfare to the demands of the U.F.A. After 1916, when the needs of the farmers' movement became increasingly pressing, he spent most of his time in organization work or in seeking to improve the economic condition of the farmers. He left the running of his own farm in the hands of his sons and his wife and was rarely at home, except on weekends.<sup>50</sup>

Wood's devotion to the farmers' cause was reciprocated in the personal prestige that he enjoyed among the wheat growers of the province. Although he adhered rigidly to democratic procedures both in the U.F.A. and later in the Alberta Wheat Pool, he exercised effective control over both organizations. His early years in the province had made him familiar with the problems of a pioneer agricultural economy and his inquiring and philosophical mind had enabled him to arrive at certain conclusions on how best to remedy the situation; because of his unshakeable position as head of the two most important farmer organizations in the province he was able to influence strongly political and economic developments. Throughout this period the agrarian movement, not only in Alberta, but also in western Canada, was in large measure shaped by the political, social, and economic ideas of this Missouri farmer.

<sup>49</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 7, 1918, p. 5.

<sup>50</sup>Interview with John O. Wood, July 18, 1948.

## *Chapter Two*

# THE SETTING

ALBERTA, during the period of Wood's ascendancy, was a frontier region and its problems were those of a pioneer economy. When Wood arrived in 1905, Alberta was still largely unsettled. The census of 1906 showed that its population numbered only 185,000.<sup>1</sup> If the province were to prosper, it must develop quickly some product whose ready sale in the world markets would attract capital to the region. This would pay for the goods and services demanded by the new community and also provide it with the facilities needed to exploit its export staple. Wheat proved to be the product needed to establish the economic prosperity of Alberta. Wheat farming, supplemented by cattle-ranching and mining, became the major occupation of Albertans. Wood had been originally attracted to the province because of its cattle-raising possibilities, but like thousands of others he succumbed to the lure of the wheat field. Only once during his early years in the province did he attempt to diversify his production and that year he grew several fields of oats. Otherwise he, like his fellow farmers, concentrated on the growing of wheat. The economic and agricultural problems of the province were, therefore, those connected with wheat farming.

Physically, Alberta, except for a semi-arid region in the south, is admirably situated for the production of cereal grains. It is part of the continental plain which covers the whole of the interior of North America but it differs from Saskatchewan and Manitoba in that its arable land lies entirely within the third and highest level of the three in which the Prairies are divided. This region slopes eastward from the foothills of the Rockies, falling from an

<sup>1</sup>*The Case for Alberta*, Government of Alberta, 1938, p. 15.



altitude of 4,000 feet at the foothills west of Calgary to 2,200 feet at the Alberta-Saskatchewan boundary. This level has suffered considerably from erosion. Deep draws and coulees are common, especially near the rivers; there is a fine example of one of these dry coulees near the Wood homestead at Carstairs. The evidence of geological change which is so plentiful in Alberta attracted Wood's attention and he became an expert amateur geologist. Most of the farm land in this region is rolling and hilly. There are also some areas like the "bad lands" on the Red Deer River south of Hanna and north of Brooks which are almost deserts.<sup>2</sup>

The soil is very fertile. In the south the land is made up largely of open treeless prairie merging gradually into a park belt, wooded country widely interspersed with open prairie. North of this area comes the great wooded belt which covers the whole northern half of the province. The soil varies from the brown and dark brown soil belts of the south to the black soil region of central Alberta between Red Deer and Edmonton, and the grey wooded soil of the forest region. Over this whole territory, precipitation, except in the Medicine Hat-Lethbridge district, is adequate for wheat growing. Even in the south where rainfall is normally scanty the bulk of it comes usually during the growing season. Moreover, the sudden northward sweep of the summer isotherms means that nearly 90 per cent of the province lies south of the isotherm 60 degrees Fahrenheit mean July temperature and that climatically and topographically, almost all the province is within the spring wheat belt. The Precambrian Shield country which effectively discourages agricultural settlement in Saskatchewan and Manitoba north of the 54th parallel cuts off only a small corner of the northeastern part of the province. Profitable wheat growing can be carried on in the Peace River district five hundred miles north of the international boundary.<sup>3</sup>

In the far southern part of the province the precipitation follows a cyclical pattern—a number of wet years succeeded by a number of dry ones when the rainfall is insufficient for wheat

<sup>2</sup>W. A. Mackintosh, *Prairie Settlement, the Geographical Setting* (vol. I of *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, edited by W. A. Mackintosh and W. L. G. Joerg, Toronto, 1934), p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 8-14; *Case for Alberta*, pp. 12-14.

growing. This region is part of Palliser's Triangle and is a northward extension of the Great American Desert. Settlers first reached this region during a cycle of wet years and were encouraged to settle in considerable numbers; when a dry cycle occurred at the close of the first World War serious economic distress resulted. The government intervened to aid the farmers and sought to overcome the lack of adequate rainfall by developing irrigation. Its first action was to guarantee the bonds of the Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District in 1921, which enabled the irrigation project to get under way. Even with this government aid the region remained chronically depressed because it proved difficult to grow crops which would pay for the high costs involved in constructing the necessary ditches, canals, and reservoirs. It was not until the development of the sugar beet industry in the late 1920's that the area regained any considerable prosperity.<sup>4</sup>

The high wheat prices of the pre-war years, the active advertising campaign of the Canadian government and the trans-continental railways, the plentiful supply of cheap, fertile land, all combined to bring about a great wave of migration into the Canadian West.<sup>5</sup> Until 1905 the great majority of these immigrants went to Manitoba and Saskatchewan. After that date came Alberta's turn to receive them. The best agricultural land was gone in the other two provinces; the discovery of early ripening Marquis wheat opened up the park lands of central Alberta to the spring wheat farmer; and the building of the Canadian Northern Railway provided him with the necessary cheap transportation. In 1906 only 223,000 acres in Alberta were sown to wheat compared with over 2,000,000 acres in both Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Between 1906 and 1916 Alberta's population increased from 185,000 to 496,000 and wheat production climbed from 3,966,000 bushels to 41,610,000 bushels.<sup>6</sup> The war temporarily halted this rapid expansion and it was not until 1924 and the recovery of agricultural prices that the settlement of new farm lands was resumed. During these years the Peace River district was opened up and the last extensive region of cheap agricultural land was brought under the plough. Between 1926

<sup>4</sup>*Case for Alberta*, pp. 56-9.

<sup>5</sup>Sharp, *Agrarian Revolt*, pp. 6-16.

<sup>6</sup>Harald S. Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation in Western Canada* (Cambridge, Mass., 1928), pp. 113-14; *Case for Alberta*, pp. 15-16.

and 1931 the population increased by over 120,000.<sup>7</sup> This was a rate reminiscent of the halcyon days before 1914.

The agricultural industry which developed on the Prairies was based on the availability of cheap land, the use of farm machinery, the cultivation of a single crop, and the presence of an adequate and relatively inexpensive transportation system. After 1900 there was a favourable conjunction of all these factors in the case of wheat and this development largely accounts for the dominant role of wheat farming in the Canadian West. Many of the new settlers had already had considerable experience in North American farming techniques. In 1916 over 70 per cent of Alberta's population consisted of immigrants from eastern Canada or the United States, and many of the British immigrants, like Herbert Greenfield, had spent some time in Ontario before moving west. Thus they had had the opportunity of getting acquainted with North American agricultural methods before becoming home-steaders. In western Canada there was the same concentration on the production of a single staple, the same widespread use of machinery with its accompanying high capital charges, and the same development of large farms, as had characterized American agriculture in the northwestern States. In order to move this wheat from the farms of interior North America to the wheat market at Liverpool, cheap transportation was a vital need. It was the construction of the Canadian Pacific and Canadian Northern Railways prior to 1914 which opened up southern and central Alberta to settlement. It was the building of the Alberta and Great Waterways and the Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railways after 1914 which was responsible for the development of the Peace River country. The relatively high price of wheat during the periods of greater expansion assisted in this growth. Wheat farming promised to pay for the necessary high capital costs involved in mechanized farming and the production of staple crops. "The same economic forces which had made settlement economically possible in the western United States worked with increasing power to stimulate settlement in the Prairie Provinces of Canada."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Case for Alberta, p. 15.

<sup>8</sup>W. A. Mackintosh, *Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces* (vol. IV of *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, edited by W. A. Mackintosh and W. L. G. Joerg, Toronto, 1935), pp. 1-19.

Since agriculture was the most important industry in Alberta, it was natural that the economic and political ideas of the farmers should chiefly determine the course of federal and provincial politics in the province. Because of their agrarian frontier background the farmers favoured reforms which would help them to secure full profits from their labour and which would give expression to their democratic political ideals. They supported such economic measures as tariff reductions, farm co-operatives, reduced freight rates, government-established wheat standards, federal regulation of the grain trade, and the construction of railways under provincial and federal assistance or ownership. Politically they advocated such democratic reforms as the referendum, recall and fixed election dates, woman suffrage, and the ending of cabinet domination of the legislature. Moreover, during the war years, the heavy importation of capital from eastern Canada to purchase land and farm machinery, left behind it a heritage of debt which made the farmers peculiarly susceptible to ideas of rural credit and currency reform.

The rapid spread of wheat farming in the province was due in no small measure to the high agricultural prices prevailing during the later years of the first World War. As the war progressed and the menace of German U-boat attacks increased, the allied powers came to rely almost solely on the wheat fields of Canada and the United States to feed their peoples and the allied armies. The short, direct sea-route from North America to Europe was more easily protected than the longer one from Australia and Argentina. As a result, the Canadian and American exporters enjoyed a considerable competitive advantage over their rivals. This was increased by the entrance of the United States into the war and the dispatch of hundreds of thousands of American troops to France. To supply their forces the American government began to purchase needed grain on the open market. The result of this action was the creation of a bull market in wheat.<sup>9</sup> Prices on the grain exchange rose so rapidly in 1916 and 1917 that both the Canadian and American governments were forced to intervene in order to protect the domestic consumers. The result was government con-

<sup>9</sup>E. Nourse, *American Agriculture and the European Market* (New York, 1924), pp. 45-57.

trol of the grain trade through the Board of Grain Supervisors in Canada and the United States Grain Corporation in the United States.<sup>10</sup> While these boards were able to peg the price of wheat and to prevent it from going higher it had already attained a level more than double that of the pre-1914 era.

The spectacular rise in wheat prices was accompanied by a sharp increase in both land values and the amount of land devoted to wheat farming. In Alberta wheat acreage increased from 1,500,000 acres in 1916 to 4,600,000 acres in 1921.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately this expansion was largely offset by an equally spectacular decline in productivity in 1918 and 1919, both years of abnormally high prices. During these two years, net income, without figuring in the cost of land, was \$3.56 and \$6.35 per acre. In 1920 it rose sharply to \$20.88 per acre, only to fall again in 1921 and 1922 when net losses of 69 cents and 14 cents per acre were estimated.<sup>12</sup> Because of the presence of a number of factors over which the farmer had no direct control it was difficult for him to check these rapid fluctuations. Wheat prices at country elevator points were determined by the Liverpool price, less the cost of transportation and handling charges in moving the grain from the wheat fields of Alberta to the wheat buyers at Liverpool. These costs were made up of railway and ocean freight rates, insurance, storage, and loading charges which in 1931 averaged 35 cents a bushel.<sup>13</sup> These payments tended to remain relatively fixed with the result that when world wheat prices were high the farmer was prosperous but when they were low he was forced to carry a crushing burden of fixed costs. His operating expenses were also set by factors outside his control. When wheat was high the cost of labour, farm machinery, and manufactured goods was likewise generally high. Usually, however, non-agricultural prices fell much more gradually than farm prices, with the result that the farmers were the most economically depressed group in the country during periods of deflation. In 1926 agricultural prices in Canada were 143.6 per cent of 1913 prices while costs of goods bought by farmers were 157 per cent of the 1913 base period.

<sup>10</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 195.

<sup>11</sup>*Case for Alberta*, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>13</sup>Mackintosh, *Economic Problems*, pp. 24-5.

By 1931 farm prices were down to 67.9 per cent but the goods bought by farmers were only down to 138 per cent.<sup>14</sup> This wide disparity was a major cause of the farmers' insistence on tariff and freight rate changes which would bring the cost of items they had to buy more in line with the price they received for their grain.

The climatic changes on the Prairies, particularly the variation in rainfall and the prevalence of hail storms, also exercised considerable influence on the quantity and quality of the wheat. In Alberta variability of wheat yields ranged from between 20 to 30 per cent in the forest belt to between 50 to 60 per cent in the semi-arid region in the southeast.<sup>15</sup> This is even more serious than at first appears, when it is realized that periods of low yield are not necessarily accompanied by high prices, because of alternative sources of supply. Moreover, this variation in yield is accompanied by a similar variation in grade. The years 1926-8 were years of relatively high prices for the grain growers, but this advantage was offset by the low grade of the wheat crop. In none of these years did more than 35 per cent of the crop grade No. 3 or higher.<sup>16</sup> The situation was made worse in Alberta by the heavy loss resulting from hail storms. In 1927 over 17 per cent of the acreage insured with the Alberta Hail Insurance Board was damaged by hail.<sup>17</sup> No wonder the U.F.A. and the Alberta Wheat Pool members were anxious to have the basis of wheat grading changed from appearance to milling value of the wheat. The farmers were convinced that much of the wheat graded tough, damp, or rejected was actually of considerably higher quality and efforts were made by the various farmer organizations to have the government investigate the grading system and change it to one which would include the milling value of the wheat.

An important factor affecting the net income of Alberta farmers was that of debt charges. Most of the farmers in the province were in debt to mortgage and farm implement companies and interest charges on these loans were high, averaging between 7 and 8 per cent. Wood's farm was mortgaged for \$14,000 at the usual interest rate of 8 per cent.<sup>18</sup> These interest payments repre-

<sup>14</sup>*Case for Alberta*, p. 107.

<sup>15</sup>Mackintosh, *Economic Problems*, pp. 24-5.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup>*Case for Alberta*, p. 98.

<sup>18</sup>Statement in Wood Papers.

sented a load which was heavy for farmers to bear in good times and impossible in bad times. The situation was especially serious in Alberta because, as the last area to be settled, land was more expensive to buy than in Manitoba or Saskatchewan. Much land, too, was acquired during the war when all prices were high. As a result mortgage payments and interest rates took a greater share of the farmer's gross income in Alberta than in the other two provinces.<sup>19</sup> Undoubtedly the importance of monetary reform as an issue in both federal and provincial politics in the province was caused by this. It took all of Wood's skill as a political leader and as a manager of conventions to prevent the U.F.A. from being carried away by the idea of cheap money through government fiat. No sooner was his influence removed than the farmers and the province, under the spell of William Aberhart's oratory, accepted Social Credit as the panacea which would solve all their problems.

Next to wheat farming, cattle-ranching was the most important industry in Alberta. The province possesses large grassland regions, similar to those of Montana and Wyoming, which are ideally suited for raising beef cattle. The Rockies set up peculiar air currents which bring the famous Chinook winds to much of central and southern Alberta. These winds blowing eastward from the Pacific Ocean bring with them the warm air of the Japan Current and help to moderate the severity of prairie winters. Throughout this region it is usually possible to winter cattle on the open range, nourished by the natural hay of the grasslands.<sup>20</sup>

Because of the advantages of this area numerous cattle ranches were established there as soon as the Canadian Pacific was built. Calgary became the cow capital of Canada and the Calgary stock-yards were the Canadian equivalent of those of Chicago or Kansas City. The hey-day of the cattle industry was during the 1890's. After 1900 the Dominion government refused to grant any further long-term leases on government land and with the coming of the homesteader, ranching began its long, slow retreat to the foothills region. There a profitable industry developed after 1910. The first World War acted as a stimulant by providing a ready

<sup>19</sup>*Case for Alberta*, pp. 114 ff.

<sup>20</sup>Mackintosh, *Prairie Settlement*, p. 115.

market and high prices until by May, 1918, cattle prices touched \$16.80 a hundredweight and there were nearly 1,250,000 head in Alberta in 1919.<sup>21</sup> Then disaster struck. The summer of 1919 was hot and dry and was followed by a winter of unusual length and severity, during which over 20,000 head of cattle died. This calamity was followed by the closing of the two most profitable markets for the disposal of Canadian beef. In 1920 came the Fordney Emergency Tariff which placed a heavy duty on all Canadian cattle imported into the United States. At the same time Great Britain placed an embargo on the importation of live cattle for fattening in the British Isles ostensibly because of the presence of hoof and mouth disease.<sup>22</sup> The Alberta cattle industry was dealt a staggering blow. During the immediate post-war period the cattleman was faced with the same serious economic crisis as the farmer and the same spirit of economic and political discontent was generated. Significantly enough, the first major provincial political victory of the U.F.A. was won at Cochrane, in the heart of the cattle country.

Because cattle-raising completely dominated the livestock industry in the province throughout this period, sheep-raising and hog production remained relatively minor industries down to 1926. After that date, however, the number of sheep and swine rose rapidly in comparison with the number of cattle whose numbers actually declined. Between 1926 and 1931 the number of live cattle fell 46,000 head from 1,190,000 to 1,144,000. During the same time the number of sheep rose from 504,000 to 785,000 and the number of swine from 706,000 to 1,057,000. The raising of horses, too, was an important branch of the livestock industry which had existed since the early days. In 1931 there were 745,000 horses valued at \$34,200,000 in the province. This represented approximately 40 per cent of the total value of all Alberta livestock.<sup>23</sup> While livestock-raising added appreciably to the wealth of the agricultural population it remained a subsidiary occupation in this period.

Alberta is unusually rich in mineral resources, particularly coal, natural gas, and oil. Coal was discovered in Alberta as early as

<sup>21</sup>John Blue, *Alberta, Past and Present* (Chicago, 1924), vol. I, p. 329.

<sup>22</sup>Blue, *Alberta*, vol. I, pp. 331-2. <sup>23</sup>*Case for Alberta*, p. 20.



1789 by Sir Alexander Mackenzie and in 1881 the first coal mine was opened at Lethbridge. With the building of the C.P.R. branch line from Lethbridge through the Crow's Nest Pass the development of Alberta's coal reserves began in earnest. By 1921 the province was producing 5,900,000 tons valued at \$27,246,000. It has been estimated that Alberta has about eight times the coal reserves of Great Britain and is one of the world's richest sources for lignite and bituminous coal. The major factor limiting the expansion of the coal industry has been the expense of moving Alberta coal to the markets of eastern Canada. The high transportation costs and the relatively low grade of the coal have prevented the growth of a really extensive coal mining industry.<sup>24</sup> Similarly the oil and natural gas deposits never fulfilled early expectations until the opening up of the Leduc fields south of Edmonton in the nineteen forties. In 1913 oil and natural gas were discovered in the Turner Valley, near Calgary, and for a brief period Calgary became a boom town reminiscent of Tulsa during the Oklahoma oil stampede. The outbreak of the first World War ended this movement and although the Turner Valley field continued in production all through the 1920's, it failed to justify the rosy expectations of 1913-14.<sup>25</sup> Thus, despite Alberta's mineral resources, and its ranching industry throughout the era of Wood's ascendancy wheat farming remained the major industry and the U.F.A. did not have to share its control over provincial affairs with any other occupational group.

In the political and economic history of Alberta no question has occupied a more prominent place than that of transportation. Because of its geographical position Alberta was dependent on the establishment of a cheap and adequate railway network for its whole development. On the west it was shut off from the Pacific coast ports by the wall of the Rockies, and on the east it was separated from the ports at the head of the lakes by a one thousand mile stretch of prairie. There could be no development of wheat growing, cattle raising, or coal-mining without a transportation system which would make it economically possible to move these bulky staples to the metropolitan market. The great

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 213-21; Blue, *Alberta*, vol. I, pp. 363-9.

<sup>25</sup>*Case for Alberta*, pp. 221-6.

expansion of agriculture which took place in western Canada after 1900 was caused as much by the building of new railway lines and the sharp fall in ocean freight rates as by any other factor. The successful opening of the Peace River district in the 1920's was greatly facilitated by the building of the Northern Alberta railways. Similarly the opening of the Panama Canal made it economically feasible to develop Vancouver and Prince Rupert on the Pacific as alternative ports to Fort William and Port Arthur on the Great Lakes for export of wheat to Europe.

Because of the importance of railway transportation to a pioneer economy every effort was made by both federal and provincial governments to induce private capital to construct the necessary railways. Beginning with the Dominion's lavish land grants and subsidies to the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1880, Canadian transcontinental railway construction followed the familiar pattern of North American transportation history. Between 1880 and 1914 three transcontinental railway systems were constructed in Canada, largely at the expense of the Canadian taxpayer. Of the three only the C.P.R. was able to survive the dislocations caused by the first World War and the collapse of the immigration boom. To save the whole transportation system from bankruptcy during the war and to protect its investments and bond guarantees, the federal government was forced to intervene. Following the Drayton-Acworth report in 1916 the Borden ministry took steps to acquire the Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk, and Grand Trunk Pacific Railways which were joined together to form the Canadian National Railways.<sup>26</sup>

The Alberta provincial government also took an active part in encouraging railway construction. As early as 1909 the Rutherford government announced a railway programme based on bond guarantees to the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Northern lines of \$13,000 per mile for the construction of branch lines and of \$20,000 per mile to a group of private capitalists for the construction of the Alberta and Great Waterways designed to connect Edmonton with the lake and river system of the north. This was followed in 1912 and 1913 by a guarantee of \$20,000 per mile to the Edmonton, Dunvegan, and British Columbia and the Central

<sup>26</sup>Mackintosh, *Economic Problems*, pp. 33-5.

Canada Railways.<sup>27</sup> These lines were designed to open up the Peace River country but with the decrease in immigration after 1914 and the agricultural depression of the early 1920's they failed to earn sufficient profits to pay the interest charges on their bonded indebtedness. As a result the province found itself with a railway problem similar to that of the federal authorities. The question of what to do with the railways and the burden of debt charges involved in these government guarantees remained a difficult one to solve throughout this period. By 1937 these railway guarantees had resulted in the loss of over \$23,000,000, which was a considerable sum for an agricultural province to bear.<sup>28</sup> This was particularly serious for Alberta because as a frontier region it was forced to undertake additional heavy capital expenditures in connection with roads, communications, and education.

Equally important for the economic success of agriculture was a favourable settlement of the problem of freight rates. A long step in this direction was taken in 1897 through the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement between the Canadian government and the Canadian Pacific Railway. In return for a federal subsidy of \$11,000 a mile up to a maximum of \$3,600,000 for the construction of a branch line from Lethbridge to Nelson, B.C., through the Crow's Nest Pass, the railway agreed to establish special reduced rates on eastward shipment of wheat and flour and the westward movement of a number of articles needed by new settlers.<sup>29</sup> This agreement became the bulwark protecting the farmers against exorbitant rates during the next quarter-century, and the temporary suspension of these rates during the war emergency was an important factor in the rise of political insurgency on the Prairies. The re-establishment of these rates on a statutory basis in 1922 and its extension to wheat moving westward from Alberta through British Columbia in 1927 represented a great victory for the organized farmers.

Alberta was the last province to be settled and this had an important effect on its social and political complexion. Like all the Prairie Provinces it drew the great majority of its settlers from

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>28</sup>*Case for Alberta*, pp. 77-81.

<sup>29</sup>Mackintosh, *Economic Problems*, pp. 39-40; G. P. de T. Glazebrook, *History of Transportation in Canada* (Toronto, 1938), pp. 384-93.

eastern Canada, especially Ontario. It also had a large number of recent immigrants from the British Isles and a smaller number from Europe. However, in addition to these groups there was an unusually high proportion of Americans among its settlers. Wood was only one of nearly a hundred thousand American-born farmers and their families who left the western United States to establish their homes in this new agricultural Eldorado.<sup>30</sup> These American farmers were already familiar with the problem of how to develop profitable farms in the prairies and foothills of Alberta. Wherever they settled they quickly became successful farmers and leaders in their rural communities. They brought with them the outlook and philosophy of the American northwest from which they had come. Many of them, like J. W. Leedy and R. C. Owens, had been prominent in American Populism, while others, like Wood and S. S. Dunham, were well read in the literature of discontent and in the radical social and economic ideas of Frank Norris and Henry George. American farm movements such as the Society of Equity and the Non-Partisan League soon developed Canadian offshoots and the U.F.A. advocated the same social and political reforms—direct legislation, single tax, prohibition, and trust-busting—as the contemporary farmers' movements in the United States. The experience of many of the association's membership with American agrarian movements helped them to guide the U.F.A. away from some of the rocks which had wrecked many of the farmers' organizations south of the border.<sup>31</sup>

While American influence over the formation of agricultural policy was easily discernible, it was not the only one. Equally, if not more, important was the effect of the philosophy of nineteenth-century English liberalism and the co-operative ideas of the Rochdale movement. The great majority of the Canadian-born immigrants came from western Ontario and they brought with them the political and economic ideas of Ontario liberalism as propagated through the *Toronto Globe*. Moreover, many who came from the United States were either Canadian by birth or

<sup>30</sup>Blue, *Alberta*, vol. I, p. 218; for a discussion of the character of this American immigration see M. L. Hansen and J. B. Brebner, *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples* (New Haven, 1940), pp. 218-43.

<sup>31</sup>For a discussion of the American influence on the Canadian Agrarian Movement see Sharp, *Agrarian Revolt*, *passim*.

the children of Canadians and this strengthened the hold of Canadian economic and political ideas in the new provinces.<sup>32</sup> Almost all the prominent members of the farmers' movement in Alberta were originally Liberal in party politics. The importance attached by the Progressive party to tariff reform and free trade in the necessities of life was largely the result of this Canadian background. Within the farmers' movement in Canada the emphasis was placed on those reforms which would reduce the cost of production or alternatively increase the return that the farmers received for his product.

As a result there was a widespread interest in the development of marketing organizations based on the principles of the Rochdale co-operative movement. Many members, both of the Wheat Pools and of the earlier established farmer-owned grain companies, had had experience in the co-operative movement in Great Britain. P. P. Woodbridge, C. Rice-Jones, and Herbert Greenfield, for example, participated in co-operative activities in England before settling in Alberta and they joined eagerly in the formation of agrarian organizations which would improve the political or economic status of the farmer in the province. During Laurier's tour of the West in 1910 the farmer delegations which interviewed him to advocate tariff reductions were generally led by former residents of the British Isles. "There is not the slightest doubt that the free trade germ has been started, and it is growing, and as we are looking for our immigration from the Old Country to a great extent, the free trader from the Old Country will be coming over here, and the free trade will grow more rapidly."<sup>33</sup>

The agricultural movement had been limited to the formation of individual locals of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association until 1905 when the Society of Equity had been established in the Edmonton district. This was a branch of the American Society of Equity and R. C. Owens was its first president. It set up a number of co-operative business enterprises including a flour and a lumber mill. Shares were sold in these business ventures but the effort at economic co-operation collapsed within a year. In 1906 a rival

<sup>32</sup>Hansen and Brebner, *Mingling of Canadian and American Peoples*, p. 227.

<sup>33</sup>H. G. Waddie at the Canadian Manufacturers' Association Convention *Industrial Canada*, Oct., 1910, quoted by Edward Porritt, *The Revolt in Canada against the New Feudalism* (London, 1911), p. 205.

organization, the Alberta Farmers' Association, was established with D. W. Warner as president and Rice Sheppard as secretary. This body devoted its efforts to educational and political activities because it believed that the solution to the farmers' problems lay in enlisting the support of the government and in teaching the farmers to work together towards common objectives. For a few years the two organizations were rivals for the support of the farmers but in 1909 they realized the futility of this and amalgamated to form the "United Farmers of Alberta, Our Motto, Equity." Any group of ten or more farmers could form a U.F.A. local and send delegates to the annual convention on the basis of one representative for each ten members or fraction thereof. At this meeting the president and the board of directors were elected by a system of proportional representation, the policies for the year were decided upon, and resolutions were passed defining the official position of the organization on the public questions of the day. The *Grain Growers' Guide* was adopted as the official organ of the new body.<sup>34</sup> From the outset this new association was recognized as the political voice of Alberta's farmers. The provincial government was always ready to listen to its executive, and at least one provincial cabinet minister usually attended the annual convention to explain and defend the government's policy. Federal authorities were equally ready to recognize its role as the official organ of rural demands. When Laurier made his famous tour of the West in 1910 he held an interview with James Bower, president of the U.F.A. and the acknowledged spokesman for the organized farmers of Alberta.<sup>35</sup>

In 1913 the work of the U.F.A. was supplemented by the establishment of the Alberta Co-operative Elevator Company. This was a farmer-owned company which was set up under the Alberta Co-operative Elevator Act of that year. By this act the provincial government loaned to the company the money to construct a number of country elevators up to 85 per cent of their total cost. This loan was to be secured by a first mortgage on the the elevator properties. The remaining 15 per cent was to be raised from the sale of stock to *bona fide* farmers. These shares

<sup>34</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 26, 1918, p. 94; *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, pp. 357-8.

<sup>35</sup>Porritt, *Revolt in Canada*, p. 212.



*E. W. Cadman*

FARM SCENE NEAR CALGARY, ALBERTA





were to be issued at \$60 par value and 20 per cent was required to be paid up before construction could begin or the government loan become operative. Aided by the enthusiasm of the farmers, the business ability of its early leaders, and the support of the Grain Growers' Grain Company, the new company became a financial success from the start. It soon extended its operations and became a general co-operative enterprise. It established a livestock and a co-operative supply department. Its local elevator agents became grain merchants, livestock shippers, and farm supply agents. It handled the marketing of the farmers' wheat and cattle and the purchasing of their coal, flour, binder twine, and other commodities on a commission basis.<sup>86</sup>

The history of the farmers' movement in these early years shows that there were two different methods of action competing for the support of the farmer. One was symbolized by the U.F.A. and was concerned with political remedies to the agrarian problem; the other was symbolized by the Alberta Co-operative Elevator Company and believed in economic co-operation and the establishment of a farmer-owned grain company as the best solution. Though the U.F.A. was largely responsible for the legislation creating the elevator company, the two bodies soon became completely independent organizations. Wood watched this development with concern. He felt that this represented a serious dispersal of the farmers' influence. One reason why he sought later to maintain a close connection between the U.F.A. and the Alberta Wheat Pool was his determination to avert a recurrence.

The establishment of these agrarian organizations was paralleled by similar developments in the other Prairie Provinces. E. A. Partridge had taken the lead in 1906 in setting up a farmer-owned grain company—the Grain Growers' Grain Company—to compete with the organized grain trade. His object was to improve the marketing position of the individual farmer through the superior service and patronage dividends to be offered by this company. After a severe struggle with the Winnipeg Grain Exchange during which the new company was expelled from the Exchange and reinstated at the demand of the Manitoba provincial government the company was finally recognized. However, it was forced to

<sup>86</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, pp. 120-9.

abandon its proposal to pay patronage dividends and to replace Partridge as its head. In his place a young, successful farmer from Russell, Manitoba—T. A. Crerar—was made president. Crerar proved a happy choice. Under his leadership the company prospered and became a very successful business enterprise despite renewed efforts by the Exchange in 1909 and 1910 to destroy it through the suspension of the commission rule on the sale of wheat. The farmers remained loyal to their company and the only result was to increase the amount of grain handled by the Grain Growers' Grain Company.<sup>37</sup>

The victory of this organization was followed by the successful campaign to establish farmer-owned elevator companies in each of the Prairie Provinces. Once more aided by the provincial authorities, co-operative elevator companies were set up in Alberta and Saskatchewan and a provincial government system of elevators in Manitoba. In 1917 the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Company united with the Grain Growers' Grain Company, who had taken over the Manitoba provincial elevators, to form the United Grain Growers Limited. The attempt to include the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company failed because of the strength of provincial autonomy and personal jealousies among the farm leaders.<sup>38</sup>

The work of these economic organizations was aided and supplemented by the growth of provincial farmers' associations which served as sounding boards for the grievances of the pioneer wheat farmer. The financial assistance afforded by the farmer co-operative companies, the editorial support of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, and the development of able leaders, all combined to give the agrarian movement in western Canada a considerable degree of influence. When Canadian agriculture found itself facing new economic problems following the close of the first World War, it had already at hand the organization and leadership necessary to give powerful effect to its demands for economic and political reforms. The dominant position that wheat farming had attained in Alberta by 1919 made it certain that the grain growers' associ-

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 41-76.

<sup>38</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, pp. 361-3; Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, pp. 153-77.

ation would exercise a decisive influence on the course of events in the province. As president of the U.F.A. and as champion of the farmers' interests Wood was bound to play an important role in the political and economic movements of the time. The issues which he pressed and the solutions he advocated were largely the outcome of the geographical and economic position of the province and the popularity of both the U.F.A. and the Alberta Wheat Pool resulted in part at least, from their promise of reasonable solutions to the economic problems of the grain growers. Their reverses during the bleak years of the thirties were because the weaknesses of Canadian agriculture were not primarily the product of conditions in Canada, but were inherent in the worldwide economic instability of the era.

## ORIGIN OF THE AGRARIAN REVOLT IN ALBERTA

THE FIRST WORLD WAR was a turning point in the history of the farmers' revolt, as it was for so much else in Canadian history. The great immigration boom came to an abrupt halt in 1914. During the next three years the farmers found themselves squeezed between rising costs of production on the one hand and high interest and debt charges on the other. The increase in wheat prices did not keep pace with the rapid rise in their expenses, and by 1917 most farmers were less well off than they had been in 1914. The action of the government in raising the tariff and controlling agricultural prices while leaving war profits largely untaxed convinced thousands of western farmers that the federal political parties were run for the benefit of the privileged few. The political scandals of the period in connection with the Ross rifle, the construction of the Manitoba Parliament Buildings, and the enforcement of liquor legislation in Saskatchewan, all helped to convince the Alberta farmers that it was hopeless to look for reform from either political party.<sup>1</sup>

By 1917 this agrarian discontent had become sufficiently strong to lead to the issuance of a farmers' political programme by the Canadian Council of Agriculture and the nomination of independent farmer candidates to contest a number of rural ridings in the next federal election. This is the key to the understanding of political developments during the war years. Since their near victory during the reciprocity campaign of 1910-11 the farmers had come to realize their political strength. As the population

<sup>1</sup>See articles and editorials in the *Grain Growers' Guide* for June and July, 1916, for examples of this feeling.

and political importance of the West increased so did the farmers' feeling of political independence. The entrance of the Non-Partisan League into Saskatchewan and Alberta considerably strengthened this movement and extended it into the sphere of provincial politics. That this drive towards political agrarianism did not become effective during the 1917 federal election may be accounted for by the conscription crisis and the formation of the Union government with T. A. Crerar, the leading agrarian spokesman, as Minister of Agriculture. In provincial politics, however, the strength of the Non-Partisan League continued to increase. In the Alberta provincial election of 1917 two Non-Partisan League candidates were elected. It was clear that unless the farmers secured immediate and sweeping redress of their political and economic demands, there would be a widespread agrarian revolt reminiscent of the Populist crusade of the nineties in the United States.

The first faint rumbling of the political storm which was to sweep over western Canada during the war years was heard in the reciprocity election of 1911. For the first time, the Prairie farmer organizations took an active part in attempting to influence national policy. They were able to do this more effectively than in previous years because of the formation of the Canadian Council of Agriculture in 1909. This body was made up of the executive officers of the three Prairie farmers' associations and the Dominion Grange of Ontario. Later the organization was expanded to include the executive officers of the farmer-owned grain companies, the *Grain Growers' Guide*, and the United Farmers of Ontario which had replaced the Dominion Grange as the spokesman of the organized farmers in that province.<sup>2</sup>

The visit of the Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, to western Canada in the summer of 1910 provided the new organization with its first opportunity to act as the spokesman for the farmers. It helped organize deputations who met the Prime Minister at several points on his western tour to impress on him the absolute necessity for some downward revision in the tariff. At Red Deer, James Bower, president of the U.F.A., interviewed Laurier and

<sup>2</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *The Farmers' Platform* (Winnipeg, 1916), p. 1.

presented a resolution of that organization in favour of freer trade. It stated that the farmers had suffered for many years under the bondage of a protective tariff "which . . . is but the levying of tribute upon the people, not for the legitimate expenses of the Government, but for a private and privileged class . . . and to the prejudice of the agricultural interests."<sup>3</sup> Laurier was greatly impressed at the strength of western opinion on this issue. On his return to Ottawa a conference was held to consider whether some concession should not be granted to the West even though the Prairies elected only 27 of the 235 members of the House of Commons. After considerable discussion the Liberal party decided to take the plunge and enter into negotiations with the United States for reciprocity in natural products and some manufactured goods.<sup>4</sup>

In order to strengthen the government's resolution and to show the extent of the farmers' demand for tariff reform, the Canadian Council of Agriculture organized an agrarian "siege of Ottawa" in December, 1910. Nearly eight hundred farmer delegates assembled there. They marched four abreast to the Parliament Buildings and presented petitions in favour of tariff changes. Roderick McKenzie, of Manitoba, was the chief spokesman. He stated the desire of the farmers for some relief from the burden of fiscal taxation which was responsible for a 25 per cent reduction in the purchasing value of a bushel of wheat. Laurier in his reply emphasized the value of the reciprocity negotiations with the United States in remedying this condition.<sup>5</sup> The announcement of the terms of the pact was greeted with general approval by the organized farmers and in Alberta, Bower and W. J. Tregillus of the U.F.A. executive disclosed that "the farmers of Alberta will welcome the removal of the duty on cattle, horses, swine, sheep and poultry, for they have, within easy distance, a profitable market for livestock."<sup>6</sup> This emphasis on the importance of these provisions illustrates the relative importance of cattle-raising and wheat-growing in the province as late as 1911.

<sup>3</sup>Porritt, *Revolt in Canada*, p. 213.

<sup>4</sup>L. A. Wood, *History of Farmer's Movements in Canada* (Toronto, 1924), pp. 261-2.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 264-5.

<sup>6</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1911, p. 119.

The Conservatives, spurred on by the opposition of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and the Tory-Imperialists, decided to oppose the new agreement. Because of their determined opposition, amounting to a filibuster, it was impossible for the government to get the Reciprocity agreement ratified during the 1911 parliamentary session. Borden, the Conservative leader, made a tour of the Prairies during the late spring of 1911 where he made it clear that under no circumstances would he or his party support the proposed pact. Replying to a farmers' delegation at Brandon, Manitoba, he stated that: "Of your [Grain Growers'] powerful influence in this Western country, I am fully persuaded; but if it were ten times what it is and if you were able and were prepared to make me Prime Minister to-morrow on condition that I would support this pact, I would not do it."<sup>7</sup> Because of the opposition of the Conservatives, Laurier decided to appeal to the voters for endorsement of his actions. On July 29 Parliament was dissolved and Canada was plunged into one of the most bitter election campaigns in its history.

In many respects, the struggle resembled the "battle of the standards" of 1896 in the United States. On the one side were ranged the eastern Canadian supporters of free trade, like Sir Richard Cartwright; old-line Liberal politicians, like Charles Murphy; and the whole strength of the organized farmers. On the other were to be found the representatives of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association; the Imperialists of English-speaking Canada; the Nationalists of Quebec; and a number of leading members of the Liberal party headed by Clifford Sifton, who were opposed to reciprocity for business or sentimental reasons. This group waged a relentless propaganda war against the agreement. On February 20, eighteen prominent Toronto Liberals published a manifesto against the proposed pact which they declared menaced the economic and political independence of Canada. "The question is between the British connection and what has been called continentalism."<sup>8</sup> Sir William Van Horne, former president of the C.P.R., asserted that it threatened to destroy

<sup>7</sup>Henry Borden (ed.), *Robert Laird Borden: His Memoirs* (New York, 1938), vol. I, p. 316.

<sup>8</sup>Speech of Sir Edmund Walker, president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1911, p. 47.

the dam protecting Canadian industry from being flooded by American products. "Shall we not say 'Not by a dam sight'?"<sup>9</sup>

The campaign in Alberta was as fierce as that in the other provinces. The Liberal party was weakened by the quarrels over railway policy which had nearly destroyed the Rutherford government, and the Conservatives, ably led by R. B. Bennett, had considerable hopes of making gains. This belief proved illusory largely because of the attitude of the U.F.A. which, alone of the Prairie farmer associations, officially endorsed reciprocity. It issued a manifesto in which it called on all farmers to "support the candidates, regardless of party affiliations, who will support the question which must be the main issue in this election."<sup>10</sup> The strength of reciprocity sentiment in rural Alberta was largely responsible for the fact that the Liberal party carried every constituency in the province except Calgary. Here R. B. Bennett's personal popularity was sufficient to secure his election by a narrow majority. In Edmonton, on the other hand, the vote polled by Frank Oliver in the rural sections enabled him to defeat W. A. Griesbach, the Conservative standard-bearer.<sup>11</sup>

Though Reciprocity had been defeated because of the vote in Ontario and Quebec, where the Conservatives and Nationalists captured 99 out of the 151 seats, the grain growers remained loyal to their provincial associations. They attributed the failure of 1911 to insufficient organization. The U.F.A. increased its efforts to expand its membership with notable success and as its membership rose, so did its influence over federal and provincial affairs in the province. By 1914 it had become the most important agricultural body in the province and one the government listened to with deference and respect. From being the spokesman of the farmers it was only a short step to becoming the instrument of agrarian political action.

The failure of both political parties to realize the determination of the western farmers for fiscal and political reform was largely responsible for the emergence of the Progressive movement. Tariff reduction was not defeated in 1911, only Reciprocity. In 1912

<sup>9</sup>*Borden's Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 326.

<sup>10</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1911, p. 245.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 246-7.



and 1913 the *Grain Growers' Guide* continued its attack on the Conservatives as the party of privilege and corruption. In Alberta the U.F.A. was campaigning vigorously for a greater spirit of democracy in federal and provincial politics. As the farmers became more experienced in co-operating through their educational and economic associations, they became increasingly determined to use their votes to secure legislative assistance. This spirit of political independence was greatly strengthened by the economic problems created by the war and at the increased government regulation of Canadian life which resulted. Questions of taxation, prices, marketing of agricultural and industrial products, transportation, all came under the supervision of the federal authorities. The widespread belief among the agrarian class that in administering these powers the government was unduly influenced by the desires of "big business" was one of the most powerful motives for their independent attitude.

With the passage of the Canada Grain Act in 1912 consolidating and revising the Manitoba Grain Act of 1900 the farmers became aware of the value of organized political pressure. Sir George Foster, who introduced the bill in the House of Commons, stated it was the "product of all those interested in the matter after successive years of examination and discussion."<sup>12</sup> The measure became a landmark in the history of Canadian agriculture because it created a Board of Grain Commissioners under the Department of Trade and Commerce to supervise and regulate the Canadian grain trade. The main provisions of the Act dealt with the licensing of public terminal elevators and the inspection of terminal operations by the Commissioners. Mixing of grades was prohibited in public, though not in private, terminals and though checked, the evil still continued through the operation of these private elevators. In conformity with Canadian ideas on government action, the Act provided for the construction of a number of government terminal elevators to act as competitors to the private elevators and to offer to the farmer an alternative house to which to ship his grain.<sup>13</sup> The establishment of the Board of Grain Commissioners, like the setting up of the Board of

<sup>12</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 140.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 140-7.

Railway Commissioners in 1907, was another indication of the need for federal regulation of economic activities as a result of the settlement of the west. The continental economy of Canada created domestic economic problems which could not be solved on the old basis of individualism and laissez-faire. Construction of the necessary wheat marketing and transportation facilities required too much capital, and available revenue was too small to encourage competitive building by private capital. To protect the public against exploitation by monopoly, the government was forced to intervene and either to operate the necessary services itself or to regulate private business in the public interest. State control was a matter of economic necessity, not of political theory.

The farmers' demand for federal assistance became much more insistent with the end of the land boom in 1913 and the collapse of wheat prices which fell to the lowest point in a decade. The serious weakness of the grain growers' position at once became apparent. Because of the heavy burden of fixed charges for land, farm implements, and provincial debts, they were unable to reduce their costs to equalize their drop in income.<sup>14</sup> They naturally turned to the government for aid and pressed for federal legislation which would enable the farmers to establish co-operative land banks to loan money at low interest rates.<sup>15</sup> Efforts to secure tariff reductions were renewed, but without success, although in December, a delegation from the Canadian Council of Agriculture visited Ottawa to present the farmers' case. Borden listened politely, but took no action.<sup>16</sup>

The coming of the first World War ended this depression in farm prices, but brought with it other difficulties which helped materially to increase the farmers' dissatisfaction with the federal political scene. Though wheat prices advanced substantially between 1914 and 1916, it was not until 1916 that the full effect of the war on wheat prices became manifest.<sup>17</sup> Farm costs, however, rose at once and continued to rise throughout this period at a faster rate than agricultural prices. Agitation for some form of

<sup>14</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1913, pp. 30-2.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>16</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 24, 1913, p. 7.

<sup>17</sup>Wheat prices in Alberta were: 1913—61 cents; 1914—91 cents; 1915—88 cents; 1916—\$1.33. *Case for Alberta*, p. 112.

government action to alleviate the situation continued. In 1914 representation from the three Prairie Provinces was increased to forty-three members which helped to strengthen their political influence in the House of Commons. The farmer associations continued their efforts to secure a reduction in the farmers' cost of living through tariff changes, the provision of cheaper rural credit, and a reform in tax policy which would place a greater share of the burden on business and businessmen rather than on the mass of the consumers. They wanted legislation which would enable the farmers to obtain a loan from the banks at low interest rates with their crops as security, because this would allow the farmer to hold his wheat till the spring rather than have to sell it when the market was glutted and prices depressed in the fall.<sup>18</sup>

The most persistent demand during these years was that for free trade in wheat and agricultural implements with the United States. The Underwood Tariff of 1913 contained a provision allowing wheat products, and flour to enter the United States duty free if similar concessions were granted by Canada to American agricultural products. Western farmers eagerly supported a movement to take advantage of this provision and establish free trade in wheat. Resolutions were adopted at both district and provincial conventions in favour of this reform and Prairie provincial Legislatures—both Conservative and Liberal—backed the demand for free wheat. The Canadian Council of Agriculture formally endorsed the proposal at its annual convention in November, 1915.<sup>19</sup> During the parliamentary session of 1916, J. G. Turriff introduced a resolution in favour of accepting the American offer. He declared that there was a spread of seven cents to eight cents a bushel between the Winnipeg and Minneapolis market and that enactment of the legislation would mean higher prices for the western grain grower. The government, however, remained as opposed to free wheat as to free agricultural implements and, by a strict party vote, the resolution was defeated 77-44. Both Arthur Meighen and Robert Rogers, the leading western Conservatives, voted against it.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 29, 1914, pp. 5, 6; *ibid.*, Sept. 16, 1914, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 1, 1915, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, Feb. 22, Feb. 24, 1916.

Agrarian hostility towards the government was further heightened by its reception of the proposals of the Canadian Council of Agriculture in regard to war taxation and improved rural credit. Not only was there no attempt to reduce the tariff or to resort to direct taxation of incomes, but in 1915 Sir Thomas White's budget provided for an increase of 7½ per cent *ad valorem* in the general tariff and 5 per cent *ad valorem* in the British preference rates.<sup>21</sup> This action was sharply criticized by the *Grain Growers' Guide* as a "slap in the face" to the organized farmers.<sup>22</sup> The 1916 budget contained some recognition of farmer demands as it provided for a 25 per cent war profits tax on all corporation profits exceeding 7 per cent, but the lightness of the burden resulted in considerable western criticism.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, despite strong and persistent agitation for the introduction of a scheme of government-aided agricultural credit modelled on that of New Zealand, little was accomplished. The lead had been taken in this matter in Alberta where the American-born Populist, J. W. Leedy, was an advocate of provincial banks.<sup>24</sup> At the 1915 annual convention of the U.F.A. a resolution had been adopted by an overwhelming majority supporting the setting up of credit societies to loan money at 4½ per cent interest.<sup>25</sup> Supporters of the existing methods, like W. A. Buchanan, editor of the *Lethbridge Herald*, declared that the presence of a large number of American-born farmers in the province had helped create this distrust of the Canadian banking system and had led to the demand for the development of a system modelled on that of the United States.<sup>26</sup>

The financial collapse of the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific Railways, despite the large government subsidies they had received in the past, added to the farmers' animosity, and the accusations of vast profiteering by Canadian manufacturers in regard to war contracts completed the farmers' disillusionment with the existing state of politics. Throughout the

<sup>21</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1915, pp. 199-200.

<sup>22</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 17, 1915, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1916, p. 359.

<sup>24</sup>Leedy had been an active member of the Populist movement in Kansas where he had been elected as state senator and then governor in 1896. During his regime as governor he had taken a leading part in the establishment of a system of state banks.

<sup>25</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 27, 1915, p. 13.

<sup>26</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, Feb. 11, 1916.

Prairies both farm organizations and individual farm leaders expressed antagonism towards the old political parties. The *Grain Growers' Guide* under its able editor, G. F. Chipman, began a systematic campaign in favour of the election of independent farmer members to Parliament as the only way to secure adequate attention to agrarian demands.<sup>27</sup> Chipman did not want the farmers as a body to enter politics. He preferred the creation of an independent organization, such as the Free Trade League, whose members would work to secure legislation favourable to the needs of agriculture. If the farmers wanted to, he declared, they could "place sufficient Free Trade members in Parliament to make themselves felt."<sup>28</sup>

The idea of an independent farmers' movement was received with widespread approval as the difficulty of securing recognition or reform became more and more apparent. The columns of the *Grain Growers' Guide* and the annual meetings of the Grain Growers' Association witnessed a sharp debate between the supporters of a farmers' party and those who still wanted to work through the existing political parties. The advocates of change pointed to the corruption and unprogressive outlook of both the Liberals and Conservatives, their indifference and even hostility to the farmers' demands. This attitude, R. C. Henders, president of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, attributed to the "curse of partyism."<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, opponents of this solution emphasized the previous failures of such agrarian parties in both the United States and Australia. They asserted that political action could destroy the farmers' organization by applying a political test to membership in them. The remedy lay in acting as an independent pressure group, ready to support any candidates or party which would co-operate with them in carrying out their programme.<sup>30</sup> Other opponents to the third party movement wanted the farmers to capture control of local nominations and use their power to ensure the election of right-thinking candidates.<sup>31</sup> This was the technique which was used so successfully by the Non-Partisan League in North Dakota. Throughout the

<sup>27</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, March 24, 1915, p. 5; *ibid.*, June 10, 1914, p. 6.

<sup>28</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1916, p. 746.

<sup>29</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 14, 1914, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 18, 1914, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1915, p. 16.

summer of 1916, the keen debate over political action continued. As the Borden government showed itself hostile to the farmers' programme and the Liberals proved unable to offer an acceptable alternative, the farmers became increasingly determined to find some solution. Nowhere was this spirit of political independence more manifest than in Alberta where Wood had just been elected president of the U.F.A.

Ever since the election of 1911, the U.F.A. had taken an active interest in provincial and federal affairs and had attempted to use its influence to secure agrarian reforms. In the province its position was considerably strengthened by the divisions within the Liberal party and the consequent necessity of the government to rely on rural support. In federal politics it participated with the other farmers' organizations in pressing for tariff reduction, passage of the Canada Grain Act and "free wheat," although it was less concerned than the others with these reforms. In 1914 wheat farming was less important in Alberta than in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and Alberta farmers were as anxious to solve the problems of livestock marketing as they were those of grain. Financial assistance in a province as heavily burdened with debt as Alberta was more important than tariff reductions, and agrarian leaders devoted much of their time to finding some solution to this question. Moreover, the frontier spirit among its rural population had engendered a strong desire for the introduction of a number of democratic reforms in provincial politics. The U.F.A. was convinced that if it could get these reforms independent political action would be unnecessary.

The 1912 convention passed resolutions in support of women's suffrage, introduction of the initiative and referendum, compulsory hail insurance, and the ending of the "tariff tax," but a resolution in favour of political action was defeated.<sup>32</sup> In the following year the convention continued to express the philosophy of western radicalism. Direct legislation, taxation of land values, rural credit aid, were all endorsed and an appeal was made for provincial action to secure them.<sup>33</sup> This demand for provincial reforms was supplemented in several provincial constituencies—

<sup>32</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1912, p. 583.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 1913, p. 627.

for example, Claresholm—by the farmers' passing resolutions in favour of independent political action and the nomination of farmer candidates.<sup>34</sup> The provincial government saw the danger of this development and hastened to enact legislation favoured by the farmers. In March the executive of the U.F.A. conferred with the provincial cabinet about the proposed co-operative elevator act. The outcome was completely satisfactory and P. P. Woodbridge of the U.F.A. described the new bill as "the most advanced and democratic piece of legislation yet passed in Canada." In a letter to the press on April 19 James Bower, ex-president of the U.F.A., pointed to an impressive list of provincial acts which had been enacted at the request of the farmers' association, including a direct legislation bill and a hail insurance bill.<sup>35</sup>

The ease with which the farmers secured these desired reforms was due in no small part to the political weakness of the Liberal party in the province. In 1910 Premier Rutherford had become involved in a serious political scandal in regard to the awarding of contracts for the construction of a railway into the Peace River district. He had been forced to resign and A. L. Sifton had succeeded him as Premier.<sup>36</sup> Sifton was "intellectually brilliant, a master of men, and endowed with a canny insight into their minds, familiar by long residence in the country with its deepest problems, a reformer, sometimes of an iconoclastic turn, and often arrogantly democratic."<sup>37</sup> Under his leadership the scattered pieces were welded together and the downfall of the government averted, although the Conservatives made considerable headway, especially in the south where there was considerable antagonism to the government's pro-northern policy. Because of the weakened position of the government Sifton was forced to seek help from the farmers, and in the provincial election of 1913 the influence of the U.F.A. proved the decisive factor in the Liberal victory. "It was made quite clear to supporters of the U.F.A. that, in view of what the Liberals had done at Edmonton and what the Con-

<sup>34</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 1, 1913, p. 9; *ibid.*, Jan. 15, 1913, p. 12; *ibid.*, April 16, 1913, p. 18.

<sup>35</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1913, pp. 633-5.

<sup>36</sup>L. G. Thomas, "Liberal Party in Alberta," *Canadian Historical Review*, XXVIII, Dec., 1947, pp. 411-27.

<sup>37</sup>*Blue, Alberta*, vol. I, p. 135.

servatives had not done at Ottawa, a Liberal candidate was deserving of the farmer's vote."<sup>38</sup> Aided by this agrarian support and by the under-representation of the southern part of the province, the Liberals captured thirty-eight of the fifty-six provincial seats, but more votes were cast for non-government candidates than for government supporters. Although a number of independent farmer candidates contested the election without the endorsement of the U.F.A. organization, they exerted no influence over the final result.

In the early years of the war this alliance between the Sifton government and the organized farmers remained unshaken. Farm leaders left politics alone and devoted their efforts towards building up the membership and the provision of adequate agricultural credit at low interest rates for the wheat growers of the province. When Wood became president of the U.F.A. in 1916 he announced that his first task would be the overhauling of the organization to provide a more efficient and economical system of operation. Each director was made responsible for the success of the movement in his district, and special organizers were to be appointed to assist him in a district membership drive.<sup>39</sup> Later in the year Wood made a number of speeches throughout the province in which he emphasized the need for the provision of cheap agricultural credit if the farmer was to remain solvent and he called on the banks to supply sufficient cash at low interest rates to allow the grain grower to escape the clutches of the loan shark.<sup>40</sup> The provincial authorities continued to listen attentively to the U.F.A. as the voice of agriculture. In 1916 the government passed an act establishing woman suffrage and a liquor prohibition act which had been drawn up by the temperance forces and approved by the voters after a referendum held under the Direct Elections Act.<sup>41</sup>

Towards the close of 1916 this Liberal-U.F.A. alliance was suddenly threatened by the appearance of a new organization prepared to capitalize on the discontent of many of the farmers. This was the Non-Partisan League. The Non-Partisan League

<sup>38</sup>Thomas, "Liberal Party," p. 423.

<sup>39</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, March 1, 1916, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, April 26, 1916.

<sup>41</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1916, pp. 741-2.



had originated in North Dakota as a result of the economic hardships faced by the farmers in the state and the inability or unwillingness of either of the political parties there to remedy them. The success of the Canadian agricultural organizations in establishing and successfully operating farmer-owned grain companies acted as a powerful stimulus on the development of similar bodies in the northwestern United States. The hostility of the state government and the opposition of the flour milling and grain elevator interests effectively prevented the development of such organizations in North Dakota and paved the way for the rapid triumph of the new movement. Under the direction of A. C. Townley the farmers were organized as a group pledged to vote for agrarian candidates only in the Republican and Democratic primaries and thus use the political machinery to capture control of the state government. These candidates were pledged to support a programme of agrarian reforms which included state-owned terminal elevators, flour mills, stockyards, packing houses and cold storage plants. An important plank in the League's platform was the provision of a central bank to take charge of the financial affairs of the state and to use the state's credit to advance to individual farmers as well as to the new state enterprises. This programme of agrarian socialism appealed greatly to the more radical elements among the Canadian farmers. As the success of Townley and the Non-Partisan League became more apparent in North Dakota, the influence of his ideas increased in western Canada.<sup>42</sup>

Following a visit to North Dakota S. E. Haight established the first Canadian Non-Partisan League group in July, 1916, at Swift Current, Saskatchewan. The programme of the new organization was modelled on that of the parent league in the United States. It emphasized radical political and economic reforms whose purpose was to enable the farmers to control the provincial government and to use the resources of the province to construct and finance a number of business enterprises including terminal ele-

<sup>42</sup>For a detailed discussion of the rise and fall of the Non-Partisan League in North Dakota see: T. Saloutos, "The Rise of the Nonpartisan League in North Dakota, 1915-17," *Agricultural History*, 1946, pp. 43-61; "Expansion and Decline of the Nonpartisan League," *Agricultural History*, 1946, pp. 235-52; A. A. Bruce, *Non-Partisan League* (New York, 1921); P. R. Fossum, *Agrarian Movement in North Dakota* (Baltimore, 1925); H. E. Gaston, *Non-Partisan League* (New York, 1920); A. S. Tostlebe, *Bank of North Dakota* (New York, 1924).

vators and flour mills. Provincial banks, operated at cost, were to be set up to provide cheap rural credit. In Saskatchewan where the League's efforts were seriously hampered by internal friction its influence remained small, but in Alberta it made rapid headway during the fall of 1916. Its rural credit programme appealed greatly to the farmers and it included among its members such able organizers as James Weir, J. W. Leedy, and W. M. Irvine.<sup>43</sup> As the strength of the League increased so did dissatisfaction among the farmers with the refusal of the U.F.A. to adopt a more independent approach towards political questions.

The *Grain Growers' Guide* had already reported a strong anti-administration feeling in the western provinces. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan many local farmers' associations were advocating the nomination of agrarian candidates to contest the next federal election. R. C. Henders had been chosen to contest MacDonald, Manitoba as an independent free trader.<sup>44</sup> The Canadian Council of Agriculture gave formal recognition to this new spirit when it appointed in December, 1916, a special committee to prepare a suitable political programme for the farmers to follow.<sup>45</sup> As a member of the Council, Wood was present when this decision was taken and was an active participant in the ensuing discussion. He introduced a motion that information on the proposed platform be sent to the various grain growers' associations for consideration at their annual conventions.<sup>46</sup> Political action could no longer be ignored by the organized farmers and their leaders.

The result of the work of this committee was the Farmers' Platform of 1916, the first formal expression of the wheat growers' dissatisfaction with the existing political and economic set-up. It was the product of the belief among the organized farmers that "parliament is becoming more and more under the direct influence of industrial, financial and transportation interests, represented by men of wealth in financial and industrial centres." The need was for greater representation and further consideration of the problems and interests of the rural population. This platform

<sup>43</sup>"Non-Partisan League," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept., 5, 1917, pp. 8, 25.

<sup>44</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 12, 1915, p. 26.

<sup>45</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Dec. 4, 1916.

<sup>46</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Dec. 1, 1916.

was their answer. It sought to achieve a more equitable division among the various classes in Canada and it was designed "to place the country on an economic, political and social basis that would be in the interest not only of farmers, but of the citizens of Canada generally."<sup>47</sup>

The Council declared that the three most important economic problems were those connected with "Tariff, Taxes and Transportation." The great bulk of the platform was devoted to an analysis of the iniquities of the tariff system, which was accompanied by a demand that the Reciprocity Agreement of 1911 should be put into effect, that there should be an increase in the number of food and agricultural implement items on the free list, that there should be a lowering in the general tariff rates, and that the British preference should be extended. The tariff was blamed for the growth of combines and trusts, for placing an unjust burden on both industry and agriculture through artificially raising prices, and for hindering the expansion of Canadian commerce.<sup>48</sup>

To replace the tariff as a source of revenue the Council advocated a tax on unimproved land values, a graduated personal income tax, an inheritance tax, and a tax on corporate income. To solve the transportation problems the railways were to be taken over by the government. Telegraph and express companies were also to be operated as government enterprises. Political reforms included the use of the initiative, referendum and recall, the abolition of patronage and publicity for campaign contributions, woman suffrage, and provincial autonomy in regard to enforcing liquor legislation.<sup>49</sup>

This programme, which became the platform of the new farmers' political party, illustrates the North American character of the movement. The economic and political changes demanded of the Council were such as had long been advocated by farm organizations on both sides of the border. The persistent neglect of the farmers' problems and the refusal of the government to make any serious effort to meet their demands had finally led to this political outburst. The issuance of this programme became the first step

<sup>47</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Farmers' Platform*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 6-26.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 27-53.

in a course which was to lead eventually to the election of sixty-five agrarian members of Parliament and to the emergence of Wood as a national political figure.

The question of the future role of the farmer in politics became the central topic in Alberta during 1917. The new Farmers' Platform, the activities of the Non-Partisan League, the conscription crisis, and the problem of marketing wheat under the abnormal wartime conditions, all combined to make this a matter of prime importance. At their annual convention the delegates of the U.F.A. had endorsed the programme of the Canadian Council of Agriculture and had passed a resolution declaring that both provincial and federal members must follow it if they expected to receive agrarian support.<sup>50</sup> The tacit alliance between the U.F.A. and the provincial Liberal government was renewed when the former accepted the government's offer to appoint one member of the proposed provincial rural credit board. Other resolutions called for stricter enforcement of the Farm Machinery Act to prevent "the forced collection of machinery notes before December 1st of the year in which such notes are made."<sup>51</sup>

Wood, who was re-elected president by acclamation, was interested primarily in strengthening the spirit of organized co-operation among the farmers. He heartily endorsed the amalgamation of the Alberta Co-operative Elevator Company and the Grain Growers' Grain Company to form the United Grain Growers Limited as a step in this direction. He warned the farmers, however, that economic co-operation was not enough. They must mobilize their strength as a class and support their own association because it was "the common people against the 'Big Interests'."<sup>52</sup> He devoted much of his time during this year to preaching this doctrine of co-operation. He told the Winnipeg Canadian Club that the only way to settle the difficulties between the farmer and the businessman was by a spirit of mutual concession since all the farmer wanted was fair and equal treatment from other members of the community.<sup>53</sup> He was opposed to too

<sup>50</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 31, 1917, p. 12.

<sup>51</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1917, p. 809; *Edmonton Bulletin*, Jan. 26, 1917.

<sup>52</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 31, 1917, pp. 7, 22, 23.

<sup>53</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Feb. 2, 1917.



ALBERTA WHEAT POOL ELEVATOR AT FERINTOSH  
(near Camrose, Alberta)

*Sanders*



much emphasis on politics because the primary aim of the wheat growers ought to be economic reform, and political action should only be undertaken if the "interests" used political influence to reduce the farmers' income. The experience of American agrarian parties had shown that political action was a dangerous weapon for the farmers to use because they lacked the necessary intelligent political leadership. The way to solve the problem was to develop an economic organization which would enable the farmers to understand economic conditions and make them less subject to political prejudice.<sup>54</sup> In a speech on "Truth and Democracy" at the Calgary Forum Wood emphasized that neither free trade nor political action was the best or only way to improve the farmers' position. Instead he appealed for harmony and co-operation as the way to remedy the situation, for only when "humanity" had replaced "money" as the ultimate criterion would a satisfactory solution be reached.<sup>55</sup> Obviously Wood did not share the views of the agrarian leaders in Manitoba and Saskatchewan that political action was the answer to the farmers' problems.

Wood's emphasis on developing economic co-operation among the farmers and his interest in the post-war relationship between agriculture and industry were sharply criticized by the *Manitoba Free Press*. It accused him of being more concerned with "the rights and interests of the farmers of Alberta than he was in how our freedom was to be preserved."<sup>56</sup> The charge was hotly denied by the *Grain Growers' Guide*, while the *Nutcracker*, a radical, political weekly paper published in Calgary, referred to Wood as a man well-fitted for leadership, with a "remarkable grasp of economic and political affairs."<sup>57</sup> The steady rise in the membership of the U.F.A. during this year was further proof that among the rural population of Alberta Wood's influence was increasing, not decreasing.

Wood's importance to the farmers' movement in the province was signally demonstrated by his appointment as one of the farmer members of the Board of Grain Supervisors—a body

<sup>54</sup>H. W. Wood, "The Organized Farmers and Politics," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 19, 1917, p. 10.

<sup>55</sup>Calgary *Albertan*, Oct. 15, 1917.

<sup>56</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Feb. 7, 1917.

<sup>57</sup>*Nutcracker*, May 10, 1917, p. 5.

created as a result of the 1917 agricultural crisis to handle the wheat crop of that year. The suspension of the special Crows' Nest Pass rates on wheat and flour, the rapid increase in wages for farm help, and the presence of a 25,000,000 bushel carry-over had created a serious economic problem in the West.<sup>58</sup> To meet this difficulty the government removed the ban on the export of Canadian wheat to the United States and offered to buy the 1917-18 crop for \$1.30 a bushel based on the milling value of the wheat.<sup>59</sup> Wood, as President of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, welcomed the opening of the American market and hoped that it was a sign that Ottawa "will co-operate for a greater Canada," but he criticized the \$1.30 price on the ground that the farmer would actually receive less than the feed wheat price on the lower grades.<sup>60</sup> He declared that there was no basis of comparison with the Australian price of \$1.12-\$1.16 a bushel because it was based on "fair, average quality," not grades, and Australian wheat had a shorter rail and a longer sea haul than Canadian grain. As spokesman for the Canadian Council of Agriculture he favoured the establishment of a fixed price of \$1.70 a bushel or, alternatively, a minimum-maximum price range of \$1.50-\$1.90 a bushel.<sup>61</sup> This stand was endorsed by the leading western papers. The *Edmonton Bulletin*, for example, commended Wood's statement and declared that Great Britain had been willing to pay the higher price but Ottawa, under pressure from the milling trust, had offered the lower one.<sup>62</sup>

With the entry of the United States into the war and the decision of the American administration to appoint a government commission to handle the marketing of the 1917 grain crop, the Canadian government had to follow suit. On June 11, the Board of Grain Supervisors was set up under the chairmanship of Dr. Magill, head of the Board of Grain Commissioners. Included among the members were delegates of the grain trade, millers, elevator interests, and organized farmers represented by T. A.

<sup>58</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1917, pp. 370-2.

<sup>59</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, March 23, 1917; *ibid.*, April 17, 1917.

<sup>60</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, April 25, 1917, p. 4.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, March 28, 1917, pp. 47, 50; Clipping from the *Calgary News-Telegram*, March 22, 1917, in the Wood Papers.

<sup>62</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, March 27, 1917.



Crerar and Wood.<sup>63</sup> During the summer the Board announced that \$2.25 would be paid on the 1917 crop, basis No. 1 Northern Fort William; of this figure \$2.21 would be paid the farmer less his transportation costs and 4c. would be deducted to cover handling, storage, and administrative costs. Fixed spreads on both track and street wheat were established.<sup>64</sup>

The announcement was greeted with considerable protest by many farmers because American prices were higher than this and still rising. The Board's action in placing an embargo on exports to the United States on the remainder of the 1916 crop and the establishment of a fixed price of \$2.40 a bushel added further fuel to the fires of complaint. Wood showed his courage and his saneness of judgment by his defence of the Board's action. He justified the embargo on the grounds that it would prevent speculators and milling interests from reaping unearned profits. Moreover, the higher prices at Minneapolis were only temporary since they were the result of the work of speculators and the delay by Congress in passing the necessary control legislation. The Board's aim was to set a fair price, not a minimum price, and its action was an important factor in causing the United States to set the final price at \$2.20 basis No. 1 Dark Northern.<sup>65</sup> It was in the interest of the war effort, too, he said, that wheat prices should be controlled and it was unpatriotic for Canadian farmers to take advantage of the food needs of the allied governments and charge excessively high prices.<sup>66</sup> Wood's arguments were accepted by the majority of the farmers, and little disposition to criticize his actions was shown by the U.F.A. locals.

This development was facilitated by the increasing interest in political action among the rural population of the province. The economic and political reforms advocated by the Non-Partisan League were attracting more and more attention. As the influence of the League increased, the provincial government redoubled its efforts to retain the farmers' support. For this it relied heavily on its alliance with the U.F.A. During the session of 1917 it passed a

<sup>63</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1917, p. 376.

<sup>64</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 22, 1917, p. 5.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1917, p. 12; H. W. Wood, "How Wheat Prices were Fixed," *ibid.*, Oct. 3, 1917, pp. 11, 16.

<sup>66</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, Sept. 24, 1917.

rural credits act after consultation with the U.F.A. executive, promised to strengthen the enforcement of the Prohibition Act, and enacted irrigation and drainage legislation designed to aid the development of irrigation in the south and of drainage in the north.<sup>67</sup> Dissatisfaction with the party system remained strong, however, as the results of the provincial election in June, 1917, clearly demonstrated.

The announcement of the election was the signal for stepping up the campaign of the Non-Partisan League for separate representation of the farmers in the provincial legislature. Within the U.F.A. there were demands that the organization drop its neutral attitude towards politics and take measures to ensure the nomination and election of candidates favourable to the Farmers' Platform.<sup>68</sup> Wood remained opposed to the adoption of any such policy. He preferred to follow the advice of the committee of the Canadian Council of Agriculture and have the farmers seek to capture control of the old party organizations rather than pursue a course of independent political action. In an open letter to the farmers of the province during the campaign, he asserted that if the farmers would gain mastery of the party machinery there would be no need for them to form a third party.<sup>69</sup> Wood's opposition proved decisive, and the Liberal party was returned to office without difficulty. The Conservatives, weakly led and poorly organized, failed to present any effective opposition. The Non-Partisan League was able to elect only two candidates—James Weir in Nanton and Mrs. L. C. McKinney in Claresholm.<sup>70</sup> Significantly, however, both were chosen as a result of an almost solid rural vote. Weir received only 14 out of 350 votes in Nanton, yet he was able to win by 24 votes.<sup>71</sup> It was clear that some of the grain growers were not content to rely solely on Wood's panacea of economic co-operation. They wanted more direct action and they were prepared to follow any political organization which would lead them in this direction.

The spirit of political independence was increased by the conscription crisis in the summer and the formation of the Union government. The Prime Minister, R. L. Borden, had returned

<sup>67</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1917, pp. 797-802.

<sup>68</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 6, 1917, p. 22.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, June 20, 1917, pp. 12-13.

<sup>70</sup>*Nutcracker*, June 21, 1917, pp. 5. 9.

<sup>71</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 5, 1917, p. 25.

from a visit to England convinced that conscription was the only solution to the serious manpower problem overseas. Laurier, mindful of the anti-conscriptionist attitude of French-speaking Canada, preferred a more cautious approach and demanded a referendum before invoking conscription. In the west, support for conscription was linked with the demand for conscription of wealth as well as manpower. In all three Prairie Provinces there had been increasing signs that the farmers were dissatisfied with the government's conduct of the war and the Liberals' failure to oppose its fiscal policies. Western farm leaders were concerned too with the growing shortage of farm labour and the effect on this problem if a manpower draft was adopted. In July, 1917, the U.F.A. executive endorsed conscription on the condition that it be accompanied by conscription of wealth through the adoption of a progressive income tax.<sup>72</sup>

The conscription question and the opposition to it on the part of Quebec Liberals and Laurier led to an irreparable split in the western wing of the Liberal party. Within the party an important and influential group of Liberals, led by Clifford and A. L. Sifton and J. W. Dafoe of the *Manitoba Free Press*, had decided to support conscription and to work for the formation of a national government. This programme was vigorously opposed by a large number of old-line Liberals headed by Frank Oliver and C. W. Cross of Alberta. At a western Liberal convention at Winnipeg, called to discuss the future course of the party, the Laurier Liberals captured control of the meeting. They passed a resolution reaffirming their loyalty to Laurier as their leader and another favouring the prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion but not expressly endorsing conscription. The Farmers' Platform was accepted, after some debate over railway nationalization, as the official platform of Prairie Liberalism. The resolutions of this convention were widely criticized by other sections of Canada. Even the *Grain Growers' Guide* was critical of the rejection of the Turriff amendment in favour of using "force if necessary" to solve the war's manpower needs.<sup>73</sup>

The division of the western Liberals on conscription hastened the formation of the Union government. Throughout the long, hot

<sup>72</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, July 13, 1917.

<sup>73</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 15, 1917, p. 5.

August days negotiations among the various political and economic groups in the country continued. As leading members of the farmer organizations, Wood and Crerar were invited to take part. Both had several conferences with Borden and both were sounded out on their willingness to enter the cabinet. The original idea apparently was for Crerar to become Minister of the Interior, and Wood, Minister of Agriculture.<sup>74</sup> Whether Wood was actually offered the position or not is doubtful, but that he could have had it if he had wanted it, there is little question.<sup>75</sup> However, early in the negotiations he made it clear that while willing to support conscription and the Union government, he felt that his rightful duty was to remain with the U.F.A. Moreover, he believed that his unfamiliarity with Canadian parliamentary customs and ideas would prove a serious handicap.<sup>76</sup> Once more Wood rejected a political career in favour of remaining a leader of the organized farmers in Alberta.

The formation of the Union government with Crerar as Minister of Agriculture brought to a temporary conclusion the farmers' efforts to form a new party or to try and capture control of an old one. The exigencies of the war which had brought this movement into prominence now prevented it from proceeding to its logical conclusion. The programme of the new administration, however, showed the effects of the farmers' demands because it pledged itself to civil service reform, income and war profits taxes, and the encouragement of co-operative activities.<sup>77</sup> In general the leaders of the farmers' movement backed the administration. The *Grain Growers' Guide* gave it an editorial blessing but wanted the candidates from the West to be chosen on a win-the-war, not on a party, basis in order to protect the farmers' interests. Unfortunately, the necessity of uniting on a single candidate to receive the soldier vote seriously weakened the independent farmers' movement. As a result, only six avowed agrarian representatives were elected.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>74</sup>W. L. Morton, "Social Philosophy of H. W. Wood, the Canadian Agrarian Leader," *Agricultural History*, XXII, April, 1948, p. 115.

<sup>75</sup>Borden's *Memoirs*, vol. II, p. 741; Sharp, *Agrarian Revolt*, p. 124.

<sup>76</sup>Statement of A. R. Ford who was personally active in the formation of the Union government and knew Wood, *London Free Press*, June 15, 1941.

<sup>77</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 24, 1917, p. 5.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1917, p. 5; *ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1917, p. 3; *ibid.*, Dec. 26, 1917, p. 3. These included T. A. Crerar and R. C. Henders in Manitoba and J. A. Maharg in Saskatchewan.

The only real contests in this campaign in Alberta took place in the rural constituencies. The Unionist cause was secure in the urban centres, but among the farmers there was considerable dislike and suspicion of the new administration. The Wartime Elections Act, by depriving of the vote all former inhabitants of the Central Powers who had been naturalized since 1902, helped fan the flames of this political discontent.<sup>79</sup> The Non-Partisan League campaigned strongly against the government and nominated candidates in Victoria, Bow River, and Macleod. James Weir denounced the new administration as the work of Clifford Sifton and as an instrument to protect the power and position of vested interests. He declared that despite the presence of Crerar, the farmers' difficulties would receive as little consideration from the Unionist government as from the strictly party administrations which preceded it.<sup>80</sup> The Laurier Liberals, who were well organized by C. W. Cross and Frank Oliver, also made a bitter attack on the new administration. They accused the cabinet of planning to use conscription to draft farm labourers into the army. This was an effective cry because of the serious shortage of farm help in the West. To counter it the Unionists published large full page advertisements in the western farm journals and newspapers specifically stating that agricultural labour would be exempted from the draft.<sup>81</sup> Moreover, to counter the Liberal and Non-Partisan League influence among the farmers, the government sought to enlist the support of Wood and the U.F.A.

While Wood refused to take any official part in the campaign as head of the U.F.A., unofficially he strongly endorsed the Union cabinet. He attended a Unionist nomination meeting in Calgary and served on the committee to select the government candidate.<sup>82</sup> When Weir visited Marquette and criticized Crerar's action in entering the Borden administration on the grounds that it was neither in the farmers' best interests nor representative of western agrarian feeling, Wood promptly repudiated the charges. He declared that Weir's views were not those of the U. F. A. executive and that, personally, he supported Crerar as the representative of

<sup>79</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1917, p. 597.

<sup>80</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, Oct. 12, 1917, p. 2; *ibid.*, Nov. 9, 1917, pp. 8, 9; *ibid.*, Nov. 23, 1917, p. 8.

<sup>81</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 12, 1917, p. 27; *Manitoba Free Press*, Dec. 15, 1917.

<sup>82</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 13, 1917.

the farmers of the west.<sup>83</sup> On the drafting of farm labour Wood was a strong supporter of exemption because he believed that the contribution of the grain grower was as important as that of the soldier and declared that "the issues of this war will yet be decided on the wheat fields of western Canada."<sup>84</sup> Wood warmly endorsed the government's announcement that farmers would receive a blanket occupational deferment, and it was in no small measure due to the farmers' confidence in his judgment that the Unionists made a clean sweep of Alberta.<sup>85</sup> The *Edmonton Bulletin*, which had opposed the government, later admitted that Wood's support was a major factor in the great victory won by the Unionist candidates on the Prairies.<sup>86</sup>

The election of 1917 showed the western farmers how influential they could become if they were to remain united. Fifty-four of the fifty-seven constituencies west of the Great Lakes returned Unionist supporters and it was this virtual clean sweep which was responsible for the extent of the government's majority.<sup>87</sup> For Alberta and the U. F. A. the results were even more significant. Premier Sifton retired as provincial Premier to become Minister of Customs and was succeeded by Charles Stewart. Stewart was popular among the farmers but lacked the necessary power of leadership to hold together the diverse personalities within the provincial Liberal government. Sifton's retirement was soon followed by those of Cross and Wilfrid Gariepy, both strong supporters of Laurier in the election.<sup>88</sup> As the provincial administration became more divided, its dependence on the farmers increased. The formation of the Unionist government, moreover, had helped to weaken the political organization of both old parties, which in turn contributed to the creation of a spirit of political independence among the grain growers.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 6, 1917. Crerar was the Unionist candidate in Marquette riding, Manitoba.

<sup>84</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, Nov. 28, 1917.

<sup>85</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Dec. 10, 1917.

<sup>86</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, Feb. 3, 1923.

<sup>87</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 26, 1917, p. 5. The final standing was Unionists 137 and Liberals 93, a majority for the government of 44.

<sup>88</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1918, p. 707.

## THE DIE IS CAST

THE GENERAL ELECTION of 1917 only temporarily halted the movement towards independent political action among the farmers. As the war progressed and the political and economic disabilities of the farmer continued, the spirit of unrest soon revived. Moreover, the movement was no longer confined to the wheat growers of western Canada; throughout 1918 and 1919 the desire for independent political action increased noticeably among all parts of rural Canada. Every provincial farmers' association from Nova Scotia to British Columbia began to make plans for the next general election. In Ontario, for example, the political scandals of 1915 and 1916 and the growing anti-protectionist feelings of the farmers had threatened the Conservative domination there. Although Unionist candidates had been generally successful in 1917 their majorities had been considerably smaller in rural than in urban constituencies. In 1919 the farmers' resentment at the cancellation of exemption of farmers' sons from military service and the general revolt against both the old political parties led to the defeat of the Conservative provincial administration and the establishment of a United Farmers of Ontario government. It was clear that the farmers were roused and that they were determined to achieve redress of their grievances through a political movement. The reissuance of the Farmers' Platform in 1918 and the election of O. R. Gould in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, by a great majority, were indications of the rural population's repudiation of their political bondage to the party system. The "New National Policy" became the rallying point for all discontented agrarian elements in the country, and the resignation of T. A. Crerar from the Unionist cabinet to head the farmers'

parliamentary bloc was the sign that the die was cast. Rural Canada was launched on the stormy sea of political action!

In Alberta these years were tense and exciting because of the conflict between the supporters of the independent political organization and the followers of Wood's philosophy of group co-operation. Wood used his personal prestige to win the farmers' support for his point of view against the appeals of the Non-Partisan League and other third party advocates. The U.F.A. provincial meetings and the district association conventions were convulsed by this internal struggle. It says much for Wood's ability as a leader that not only did his ideas on political action prevail but that he managed to gain the support of all but a small group of irreconcilables. As a result, the U.F.A. emerged from these trying years with its membership greatly swollen and with Wood's position as leader of the farmers' political movement in the province acknowledged. The violence of the struggle attracted the attention of many outside the province, and Wood was recognized not only as the most important figure in the Alberta farmers' organization but as one of the outstanding figures in the Canadian agrarian movement as a whole. He owed this prominence largely to his outspoken advocacy of the farmers entering politics, not as a political party, but as an economic group.

The origin of his philosophy was to be found in his American background and his wide reading in the philosophy of natural law. His experience in American agrarian movements had shown him how easy it was for a farmers' political party to be captured by persons little concerned with advancing the aims of their agrarian constituents. His knowledge of the writings of philosophers like John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer had made him aware of the difficulty of preserving democracy in a society dominated by the concept that progress was the result of a struggle for existence in which only the fittest survived. He had become interested in solving the problem of how to protect the individual against the forces of organized plutocracy growing out of the rise of a competitive, industrial society. For the democratic ideal to survive, "humanity" must replace "money" as the motivating

<sup>1</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, pp. 329, 387, 655.



force in human behaviour. From this generalization it was but a short step to his theory of group action as the only way by which these "human" reforms could be gained.

The key to Wood's philosophy was his belief that man was guided by social laws. Although not religious in a formal sense, he was a deeply spiritual person with an almost mystical faith in the democratic nature of group action. Like most other radical figures of the period he was strongly influenced by the concept of the "social gospel" and he looked on agrarian co-operation not only as an instrument of political reform but as a method of bringing about social regeneration. To him the difference between religion and science was that science was interested in gathering knowledge about man but not in his destiny, whereas religion was concerned with showing man's future destiny. Man was a social being and Christ's teachings were concerned with developing the true social spirit in humanity. Jesus did this by pointing out what these true social laws were and how they could be achieved. Man was like a wheat field in which "good" and "evil" were so interwoven that it was impossible to destroy the one by violence without destroying the other, too. Only by building up the wheat or "good" through co-operation with God's will could the tares or "evil" be overcome and be blown away like chaff. "My religion and my philosophy of life are founded upon a belief in the scientific development of man, up to an ultimate knowledge of the Truth as taught by Christ; and the development of a social system in perfect harmony with Nature's laws, which are the laws of God."<sup>2</sup>

Wood believed that the solution to the farmers' political, economic, and social problems lay in the development of a spirit of social co-operation among the farmers as a group. His experiences in the United States had convinced him that the chief danger which confronted the farmers' movement was loss of its unity. It was his fear that "interests" not connected with the farmers would assume control of the political movement which largely accounted for his reluctance to enter politics. He preferred to have the farmers gain their ends by co-operative

<sup>2</sup>H. W. Wood, "My Religion," clipping from *Toronto Star Weekly*, no date, in Wood Papers.

action as a group outside a political party. He believed that the farmers and businessmen could settle their differences by negotiation based on the recognition that on the prosperity of the farmer depended the prosperity of all. Political pressure was an instrument which should be used only as a last resort.<sup>3</sup>

In developing his philosophy Wood was influenced not only by his religious training and previous political experience but through his reading where he had come into contact with the class theories of Marx and with the political pluralism of M. P. Follett in "The New State." While Wood's doctrines of class government had largely been worked out before Miss Follett's book was published in December, 1918, it served to strengthen his belief in their soundness. His Jeffersonian political background left him with a strong and enduring belief in the virtues of democracy to which the materialism of Marx made little appeal. It is significant that in the summer of 1918, when his group government ideas were reaching fruition, he should have delivered a number of Chatauqua addresses on "Democratic Organization."<sup>4</sup> To Wood, group action was the means by which democracy would be finally and completely achieved. In these addresses he emphasized the moral and economic greatness of a movement which brought the farmers together and enabled them to carry out as a group democratic reforms which would have been impossible for them as individuals. "Anyone who after that would not associate himself with the Grain Growers' movement must be hopelessly insane," wrote one of his hearers.<sup>5</sup>

The closest Wood came to a systematic exposition of his philosophy was in a number of articles on group action which appeared in the *Grain Growers' Guide* in December, 1918. These should be supplemented by various articles and speeches in other farm journals and in the daily newspapers. His annual addresses to the U.F.A. were also an occasion for the expounding of the virtues of group government and the dangers of weakening the farmers' association. Wood's ideas lacked a formal organization of more systematic philosophers; nonetheless they exerted a tremendous influence over the minds of the Alberta farmers.

<sup>3</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Feb. 2, 1917.

<sup>4</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 14, 1918, p. 32.

<sup>5</sup>Letter in the *Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 9, 1918, p. 12.

This was because to him his philosophy was not an academic theory but a burning conviction. He brought to the farmers' movement the same sense of moral purpose that characterized John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. He regarded the struggle to secure social progress through group activity as a battle against the forces of evil. "If we be true to our just cause, the upward way will not deter us; the giants cannot overcome us."<sup>6</sup>

Wood's philosophy was derived from his theory of progress. To him all change was the result of the operation of two social laws—the false law of competition and the true law of co-operation. The law of competition was the method by which the animal selfishness of man had been overcome through the development of competitive organizations which had enabled the strong to destroy the weak and to establish themselves on an autocratic basis. The Anglo-Saxon nations had succeeded in destroying one form of autocracy, only to pave the way for another because of their emphasis on personal liberty. This had enabled the autocratic few to seize control of the government and exploit the other citizens in the name of personal freedom. In Canada, for example, the false law of competition had enabled the manufacturers to advance their interests at the expense of the farmers and the other elements in the community.<sup>7</sup> The only hope for future progress lay through the development of new organizations which would work for the solution to social and economic problems by the true law of co-operation, however long that might require. "True progress can come only as the result of thoughtful, continuous, co-operative effort. This progress will necessarily be slow, but it must be continuous. Nothing can hinder it more than the mistakes of thoughtless impatience."<sup>8</sup>

This true law of co-operation was the only remedy for the economic and social injustices of modern civilization. "Unless we can reorganize the fabric of civilization, unless we can grasp the true laws of life and learn how to put them into practical operation, unless we can rebuild civilization from the foundation stone up and make a true democracy in which war will be as

<sup>6</sup>H. W. Wood, Annual Address at U.F.A. convention, U.F.A., Feb. 1, 1923, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup>H. W. Wood, "Organization for Democracy," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 4, 1918, pp. 21 ff.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 29, 1919, p. 28.

impossible as peace is today—unless we can do all that, we must face a future absolutely without hope.”<sup>9</sup> In this spirit of co-operation was to be found God’s sign that man could gain salvation through his own efforts. “The Kingdom of Heaven and perfect democracy are synonymous terms.”<sup>10</sup> Co-operation was the only practical way by which this perfect democracy could be attained, and group organization was the method by which co-operation could best be made effective.

This was Wood’s solution for replacing the false social law of competition with the true social law of co-operation. The only way to overcome the appeals to passion and prejudice by the political party was through the development of a higher unit of citizenship which was to be found in the economic class group because economic interests were at the base of the social structure. Human perfection could be achieved only through group organization—never through political parties, because the latter were controlled by plutocratic interests. The people, organized on a democratic class basis, must strive to destroy competition or be destroyed by it, and the way to achieve complete democracy lay through the creation of organized class groups who would act as spokesmen for the political and economic needs of their members. He visualized a society in which the people would be organized according to their class interests and politics would be a co-operative effort among these various economic groups. That under this system democracy would finally prevail, Wood never doubted. “It cannot fail,” he declared, “because the Supreme Power that flung the numberless hosts of worlds out into infinite space, set them whirling in their fixed courses, lit them with effulgent splendour and revealed them to the eye of man, has this work in hand and will not let it fail.”<sup>11</sup>

In the political upheaval which swept over most of rural Canada in 1918 and 1919 Wood’s philosophy of group action was accepted by the majority of the farmers of Alberta as the basis for political organization. Not all of them grasped the full

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 4, 1918, pp. 75, 76.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 11, 1918, p. 35.

<sup>11</sup>H. W. Wood, “Democratic Group Organization,” *U.F.A.*, April 15, 1922, pp. 5 ff. For a detailed analysis of Wood’s philosophy see: W. L. Morton, “The Social Philosophy of Henry Wise Wood, the Canadian Agrarian Leader,” *Agricultural History*, XXII, April, 1948, pp. 114-23.

meaning of Wood's ideas, but they did accept his major premise that the success of their political revolt depended on the maintenance of agrarian control over their political activities. Under Wood's powerful leadership they developed a spirit of co-operation among themselves which made the farmers' movement in that province unique within the Canadian agrarian crusade. This was achieved only after a severe struggle within the U.F.A. between Wood and his supporters and those who believed in separating the political activities of the farmers from the economic and social aspects. That Wood's conception prevailed and that, in Alberta, political organization remained a part of the work of the farmers' association is eloquent testimony to the personality of Alberta's Lincoln. The federal and provincial agrarian members in Alberta were elected as representatives of the United Farmers of Alberta—not as representatives of the farmer or Progressive political party.

During 1918, political events moved rapidly to a climax. The U.F.A. convention in January showed that there was considerable unrest among the farmers of the province. Membership in the U.F.A. had continued to grow rapidly throughout 1917, particularly in the northern and central regions where the movement previously had been weak.<sup>12</sup> Resolutions adopted by the convention were concerned largely with those federal and provincial policies which bore directly on the farmers. The proposed railroad rate increase was condemned and a demand was made for nationalization of the railways including the Canadian Pacific Railway. The delegates also wanted farm machinery placed on the free list and the raising of federal revenue by a direct tax on land values and natural resources. In provincial affairs the close connection between the provincial government and the U.F.A. was symbolized by the speech Premier Stewart made to the convention. In his address he promised that a public health bill would be introduced along the lines advocated by the farmers' association.<sup>13</sup> Significantly no mention was made of either political action or the war, except by Wood, who was once more unanimously re-elected president amid prolonged applause.

<sup>12</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 30, 1918, pp. 8, 24.

<sup>13</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1918, pp. 725-726.

Wood's presidential address dealt almost exclusively with the wheat marketing problem. He called on the farmers to increase the amount of grain available for export. He pointed out that all *bona fide* farmers had been exempted from military service because of the need for food. To justify this they must increase their efforts. "Every ounce of meat or bread we can save by strict economy will help. Then, God helping us, let us do our best."<sup>14</sup>

Despite the official apathy towards political action there was a good deal of debate on the question behind the scenes. The Non-Partisan League, of which the majority were also U.F.A. members, was well represented at the convention. It held a public meeting which attracted a large attendance who displayed considerable enthusiasm for farmer participation in politics. Under the direction of H. W. Johnson and W. J. Irvine the influence of the League was extending rapidly. At its March convention three members of the U.F.A. executive, J. W. Leedy, James Weir, and W. D. Trego, were present and played conspicuous roles in the discussion of League affairs.<sup>15</sup> Since the League was dedicated to political action as the means of solving the problems of the farmer, its growing influence was indicative of the strength of the spirit of political revolt among the farmers. Irvine told a U.F.A. picnic group in the summer of 1918 that the Non-Partisan League was the political wing of the farmers' movement and that the educational work of the U.F.A. was largely responsible for the success of the League.<sup>16</sup>

Within the agrarian movement as a whole there was a feeling that the farmers' difficulties had not received sufficient consideration in the past. The new spirit of independence was shown in the attitude of the Canadian Council of Agriculture towards wheat prices. At its Regina meeting the Council passed a resolution favouring a fixed price on the 1918 crop and a minimum price on the crop of 1919.<sup>17</sup> It persuaded the Board of Grain Supervisors to accept its figure of \$2.24½ as the guaranteed price for the 1918 grain crop.<sup>18</sup> Wood, as president of the Council and

<sup>14</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 30, 1918, pp. 8, 24.

<sup>15</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, Feb. 8, 1918, p. 7; *ibid.*, March 29, 1918, pp. 12-13.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, July 19, 1918, p. 15.

<sup>17</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, March 13, 1918.

<sup>18</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 29, 1918, p. 5.

one of the farmer representatives on the government board, was active in securing this victory for the organized grain growers. His experience as a member of the Board of Grain Supervisors proved very useful to him later because it showed him how an organized group could obtain justice for its members where individual efforts would have been useless and, secondly, that savings would accrue to the farmers through the elimination of speculative marketing and the handling of the wheat by a single marketing body.

✓ In 1918 the most important single event to stimulate the movement for independent agrarian political action was the sudden announcement on April 19 of the cancellation of all exemptions from military service for occupational reasons in the twenty to twenty-two age group.<sup>19</sup> This was a violation of the promise of the Borden government made during the election campaign of 1917. A large delegation of angry farmers headed by Caron, Minister of Agriculture in Quebec descended on Ottawa to protest. Borden defended his action on the ground that the needs of the forces in the field took precedence. The great German drive in the spring was threatening the Channel ports. If they fell, the question of wheat production would become merely academic because of the increase in the submarine menace and the consequent rise in shipping losses.<sup>20</sup> During Wood's absence, the government's hand was considerably strengthened by the action of the U.F.A. executive which passed a resolution supporting the decision on the ground that the administration was the best judge of the situation.<sup>21</sup> Despite the open and declared hostility of the Quebec and Ontario farmers, the cabinet refused to rescind the order. This action resulted in markedly increasing the farmers' antipathy towards the Union government. James Miner, of the Non-Partisan League, who had attended the farmers' march on Ottawa, stated ominously on his return to Alberta that "it is now known what they can expect from us next election time—whenever that may come."<sup>22</sup>

Among the farmers the position of the U.F.A. executive was sharply criticized, and resolutions condemning its action were pass-

<sup>19</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1918, p. 465.

<sup>20</sup>*Borden's Memoirs*, vol. II, pp. 801-3.

<sup>21</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 22, 1918, p. 10.

<sup>22</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, June 7, 1918, p. 7.

ed by over a score of U.F.A. locals. The grain growers declared that under the promised exemption they had greatly extended their operations and were now faced with a serious labour shortage and curtailed production if the present policy continued.<sup>23</sup> So strong did this feeling become that Vice-President Percival Baker received a number of threatening letters.<sup>24</sup> Wood, who had been in Winnipeg when the resolution was passed, declared that he had endorsed the principle of the resolution but not in the unqualified form adopted by the executive. He apologized for the action of the executive and told a hostile farmer audience in Toronto that the interests of the farmers of Alberta and Ontario were identical. He called on them to develop their organization in order to be ready for the post-war period. After hearing his explanation the convention unanimously declared their unity with the Alberta farmers' movement.<sup>25</sup> To prevent further misunderstanding Wood summoned a meeting of the full Board of Directors at which a resolution was passed pointing out the serious nature of the agricultural crisis and warning the government that the situation required "the greatest possible wisdom in council and steadiness of purpose to maintain that hearty support that a loyal people owe to their government in such a time as this."<sup>26</sup> He also called a meeting of the Canadian Council of Agriculture to discuss the manpower question. At this conference a resolution was passed condemning the indiscriminate drafting of the twenty to twenty-two year old classes without considering the effect on the farm labour situation.<sup>27</sup> As a result of Wood's energetic counter-measures the unfortunate effects of the executive's action were removed and the antagonism to it among the rank and file subsided. However, their dislike of the whole policy of cancellation remained and strengthened their determination to find a new method of political action outside the party system.

This feeling was increased by the tariff controversy between S. R. Parsons, former head of the Canadian Manufacturers' As-

<sup>23</sup>*Calgary Herald*, May 4, 1918; *ibid.*, May 14, 1918.

<sup>24</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 12, 1918, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup>*Calgary Herald*, June 8, 1918.

<sup>26</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1918, p. 466.

<sup>27</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 10, 1918, p. 4.



sociation, and Wood. Parsons opposed the reciprocity proposals in the Farmers' Platform as a danger to Canadian national existence and the result of the presence of a large body of American born settlers in the West.<sup>28</sup> Wood replied in two articles in the *Grain Growers' Guide* in which he declared that the tariff worked only for the advantage of the few and denied that either the farmers or labour received any substantial benefits from it. He called the tariff system a "jungle system" which taxed the many for the profit of the few.<sup>29</sup> The sharpness of the exchange between these two influential leaders was indicative of the growing concern of the farmers over the economic policies of the Union government. Already J. A. Maharg had raised the banner of tariff reform and denied that the farmers had agreed to leave this question in abeyance during the war.<sup>30</sup> Norman Lambert had published an article calling for a re-examination of the method of solving post-war problems. He demanded that the position of agriculture in the Canadian economy be recognized and that the farmers be given a part in the solution of these problems commensurate with their importance.<sup>31</sup>

As the spirit of protest grew the question of whether or not to establish an independent farmers' political party came to the fore. In Alberta the debate was touched off by a letter from S. S. Dunham to the *Alberta Non-Partisan* in which he opposed political action because of the failure of previous attempts in the United States. He referred to Wood's statement that the U.F.A. had more important work to do than political activity and that it should operate as an influential body outside of politics. Dunham repudiated any connection between the Non-Partisan League and the U.F.A. and called on all to support the stand of "our good President" against political activity.<sup>32</sup> This letter provoked a strong reply from James Weir who asserted that there were important national questions which affect every farmer and which it should be the duty of a political farmers' organization to investigate. Moreover, that a movement failed in the past was

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, June 26, 1918, p. 10.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 18, 1918, p. 11; *ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1918, p. 12.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, May 15, 1918, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1918, p. 34.

<sup>32</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, Oct. 17, 1918, p. 7.

no guarantee that it would also fail in the future.<sup>33</sup> Editorially the *Alberta Non-Partisan* supported Dunham's stand that the U.F.A. should remain independent of politics but agreed with Weir that there should be a farmers' political organization. Letters to the editor both in the *Alberta Non-Partisan* and the *Grain Growers' Guide* showed that the farmers were becoming more and more interested in political action, and the warnings of men like Dunham and Trego that political action might destroy their economic and social organizations fell on deaf ears.<sup>34</sup>

The Canadian Council of Agriculture recognized the strength of this feeling and in November, 1918, it issued its revised version of the Farmers' Platform of 1916. This new edition was entitled the "New National Policy" and was obviously intended to replace the old national policy platform of Sir John A. Macdonald as the charter for the future development of Canada. It was concerned principally with fiscal reform and called for substantial reductions in both the general tariff and the British preferential tariff. The reciprocity offer of the United States was to be accepted. Personal income taxes, inheritance taxes, corporation taxes, and a tax on unimproved land were to be used as the chief sources of the government's income. Public ownership of transportation and communication systems was favoured. Political reforms including the repeal of the Wartime Election Act, the end of government by order-in-council, proportional representation, direct legislation, the abolition of political patronage, and the publication of campaign contributions, were also advocated. Canada's membership in the League of Nations was endorsed, and adequate provision for the demobilization and re-absorption of the personnel of the armed forces into private life was demanded. Finally, a recommendation was included that the platform should be submitted to the provincial associations to secure their approval and that steps should be taken to select candidates who would be willing to support this programme.<sup>35</sup>

The action of the Council was warmly hailed, not only by agrarian journals like the *Alberta Non-Partisan* and the *Grain*

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 6, 1918, p. 8; *ibid.*, Nov. 20, 1918, p. 8.

<sup>34</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Nov. 27, 1918, p. 26; *Alberta Non-Partisan*, Dec. 4, 1918, pp. 5, 10.

<sup>35</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 4, 1918, pp. 56, 62a.

*Growers' Guide* but by western newspapers as well.<sup>36</sup> The *Manitoba Free Press* declared that this declaration was a "practicable and practical policy."<sup>37</sup> Even the Conservative *Calgary Herald* recognized that some concession to the low tariff sentiment of the west was necessary and just.<sup>38</sup> It was clear that the war and particularly the events of the past year had taught the farmers the necessity of political organization and co-operation if they hoped to secure any substantial reforms. Wood's articles on "Organization for Democracy" which appeared in the *Grain Growers' Guide* during December struck a responsive chord in the minds of many western farmers. His blueprint for political and economic reform through organization on an economic class basis seemed sound and logical.

The announcement of the "New National Policy" made it certain that the role of the farmers in politics would become the paramount issue of the 1919 U.F.A. convention. Wood had declared, even before the convention opened, that the efforts of the farmers must be directed towards finding some way of eliminating "autocratic party rule" and "discovering some purely democratic method of taking political action."<sup>39</sup> In his presidential address he followed the same theme. He emphasized the disabilities which agriculture had suffered in 1918 and the need for the development of a co-operative organization which would restrain the autocratic rule of the moneyed interests. Radical enterprises must be eschewed and the farmers' efforts must be concentrated on building up their association.<sup>40</sup> The idea of the Non-Partisan Leaguers that they should become the political arm of the Alberta farmers' movement was obviously foreign to Wood's concept of correct political methods.

In spite of Wood's known antipathy towards the formation of an agrarian political party, the temper of the convention was clear. When the resolution in favour of political action was introduced, it was passed unanimously. It provided for the calling of conventions by the locals of each federal constituency,

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 4, 1918, p. 21; *Alberta Non-Partisan*, Dec. 18, 1918, p. 5.

<sup>37</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Dec. 4, 1918.

<sup>38</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Dec. 21, 1918.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 15, 1919.

<sup>40</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 29, 1919, pp. 7, 27, 28.

which would decide whether or not to adopt independent political action and whom to select as the farmers' candidate. The central U.F.A. executive would lend assistance to these district associations only if requested to do so by 10 per cent of the locals.<sup>41</sup> The aim of the resolution was to place control of the new political organization in the hands of the individual U.F.A. members. It was to be a "grass-roots" movement in fact as well as in name. For the democratic nature of the proposal Wood was largely responsible. He had left the chair to take part in this debate and the resolution which was finally adopted reflected his views.<sup>42</sup>

While there was general agreement on the question of political action, harmony was conspicuously absent on other issues. Wood was able to persuade the convention to amend the constitution to get rid of the election of the executive by proportional representation in favour of election by a straight majority vote. This change was attacked by some delegates as weakening the democratic character of the organization, but Wood's views prevailed. James Weir introduced a resolution criticizing the U.F.A. executive for handing over the administration of farmers' estates to the United Grain Growers. Wood defended the action of the executive, and the delegates upheld his stand by voting to table the Weir resolution.<sup>43</sup> Weir later accused Wood of supporting the termination of proportional representation as a method of choosing the executive because of the election in 1918 of J. W. Leedy and Rice Sheppard, both opponents of Wood's policies.<sup>44</sup> Though defeated on the question of political action, Wood had won a clear and decisive victory on the crucial question of how this decision was to be carried out and his general position within the U.F.A. organization remained secure. So complete was his domination of the convention that one delegate called him an "autocrat" and said that his emphasis on "gradualism" constituted a serious threat to the success of the agrarian revolt.<sup>45</sup>

The Manitoba and Saskatchewan farmer associations also adopted resolutions in favour of independent political action and

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 29, 1919, pp. 32-3.

<sup>42</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 24, 1919.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1919; *ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1919.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 23, 1919.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1919.

endorsing the "New National Policy."<sup>46</sup> When Parliament met in February, 1919, the effect of this development was immediately apparent. The western Unionist members held a separate caucus at which western problems were discussed and demands were voiced for some tariff concession to their region.<sup>47</sup> The *Grain Growers' Guide* and the *Manitoba Free Press* conducted vigorous editorial campaigns during the spring of 1919, urging the need for fiscal reform and a reduction of the duty on agricultural implements, clothing, and foodstuffs. Emphasis was placed on the necessity of securing in writing the pledge of every federal member to support the farmers' platform.<sup>48</sup> As the debate proceeded, tempers among the supporters of protection rose. Colonel Currie, M.P., attacked the farmers' movement bitterly and accused Wood of being "an avowed annexationist" and of spending \$1,000 in support of bolshevism.<sup>49</sup> Wood promptly denied the charge. The incident is significant merely as an indication of the feelings aroused by the new agrarian movement in eastern business circles.

The announcement of the terms of the budget precipitated a political crisis within the Unionist government. Sir Thomas White, Minister of Finance, refused to accede to western demands for tariff reduction because of the effect on established Canadian industries during the period of transition from war to peace. The only concession he was willing to make was the application of the Chicago railway rates on shipments to western Canada from eastern Canadian points and a slight reduction in the duty on agricultural implements. Crerar resigned in protest, and fourteen supporters of the government from western constituencies voted for the McMaster amendment in favour of free trade.<sup>50</sup>

In the West the announcement of the budget was greeted with a storm of protest. The *Grain Growers' Guide* described it as "another protectionist triumph" and said it demonstrated that

<sup>46</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 15, 1919, p. 3; *ibid.*, Feb. 19, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, March 12, 1919, pp. 97-8.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 12, 1919, p. 14.

<sup>49</sup>*Calgary Herald*, March 19, 1919.

<sup>50</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, pp. 581-583; *Grain Growers' Guide*, June 25, 1919, p. 10.

"the divine right of the money interests has not yet been terminated."<sup>51</sup> The *Manitoba Free Press* declared that the tariff had now become the dominant issue in the west and that the attitude of Prairie voters would be largely determined by this issue.<sup>52</sup> In Manitoba, R. C. Henders, the president of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, was forced to resign his position because he voted for the White budget.<sup>53</sup> The columns of the *Grain Growers' Guide* were filled with references to the indifference of the government to the agrarian demands and the need for the farmers to take independent political action to achieve recognition of their rights. When D. D. McKenzie, leader of the Liberal party in the House of Commons, supported this budget, many of the grain growers became convinced that the Liberals were tarred with the same protectionist brush as the Unionists.<sup>54</sup>

The Assiniboia by-election of 1919 provided the farmers with an opportunity to display their new independence—an opportunity which they did not ignore. The extent of the political revolt became apparent when the first Liberal convention was unable to nominate a candidate because so many supporters were now members of the new agrarian movement.<sup>55</sup> When the farmers' convention assembled it consisted of 692 delegates each representing 10 members of the grain growers' political organization in the constituency. On the fifth ballot O. R. Gould, a farmer and former Liberal, was nominated.<sup>56</sup> This meeting represented not only the farmers but urban elements as well. Gould pledged his support to the "New National Policy" and thus became the first candidate officially to campaign under its banner.<sup>57</sup> Motherwell, one of the founders of the farmers' movement and a Saskatchewan provincial cabinet minister, was finally nominated as the Liberal candidate; but despite his background, his support of the old party system condemned him in the eyes of the farmers. The grain growers entered the election not as political partisans but as

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, May 21-June 11, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>52</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, June 9, 1919.

<sup>53</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 396.

<sup>54</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 21-June 11, 1919, p. 54.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 24, 1919, p. 31.

<sup>56</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Oct. 10, 1919.

<sup>57</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1920, vol. 1, pp. 126-7.

followers of a holy cause. Gould's campaign was financed entirely by voluntary subscriptions. Wood came to his assistance and delivered a number of addresses on the value of the farmers' political movement, but his intervention was hardly necessary. The farmers were so aroused that nothing short of force could have kept them from choosing one of their own and showing their contempt for both the old parties. Gould was elected by an overwhelming majority. He carried 72 of the 80 subdivisions and polled 7,712 votes against 2,488 votes for Motherwell.<sup>58</sup> The decisive nature of this victory was a strong indication of the feeling of political independence which was sweeping over the West like a summer prairie fire. The farmers were on the march, and Wood was only echoing the sentiments of most western grain growers when he declared that "the Democratic forces of Canada are more determined than ever before to go on till Canada is made a democracy in reality, a democracy in which people will rule, and money and the 'Great National Interests', over which there has been built so much camouflage, will serve the people."<sup>59</sup>

The decision of the U.F.A. annual convention to leave the establishment of political organization in the hands of federal constituency associations left unsolved the question of how this was to be carried out. The Non-Partisan League supporters immediately claimed that this political movement should be under their control. On January 17, 1919, a letter was sent by the executive of the Non-Partisan League to the U.F.A. executive offering to combine the two organizations in support of a general campaign for political action. The executive's offer was endorsed by the League convention, and letters to the editor in the *Alberta Non-Partisan* indicate widespread approval of the plan from League and non-League members alike. J. C. Buckley of the Non-Partisan League declared that the aims of his organization were the establishment of a non-party government, government ownership of the means of wealth and production, and the support of all producing elements under the direction of special political executive.<sup>60</sup> At a meeting of delegates from fifteen U.F.A. locals in

<sup>58</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 387; *Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 15, 1919, pp. 7, 14; *Calgary Herald*, Oct. 10, 1919.

<sup>59</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 392.

<sup>60</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, Feb. 26, 1919, p. 5; *ibid.*, April 8, 1919, p. 8.

the constituencies of East and West Calgary, a district association was set up under the presidency of W. D. Spence and a resolution in favour of joint political action with labour and the veterans of the First World War was adopted.<sup>61</sup>

Wood and the U.F.A. executive remained cool to these overtures. Wood was opposed to any organization based on common political interests only. He preferred that the new farmers' movement should be a purely agrarian body under the control of the U.F.A. rather than some independent political committee. At the Medicine Hat convention on March 25-6, 1919, he made public his opposition to non-U.F.A. direction of the farmers' political movement. He declared that the organization should function as a branch of the U.F.A.; that it would be willing to co-operate with other groups but not amalgamate with them; and that membership in the political movement should be limited to locals of the U.F.A.<sup>62</sup> This stand was severely criticized editorially by the *Alberta Non-Partisan* as being too narrow because it meant that the farmers' political movement could be entered only "by the door of the U.F.A."<sup>63</sup> At a meeting of the two executives held on March 28 a resolution was adopted favouring joint action by the two farmer organizations, but the question of how political affairs were to be organized was left, at Wood's insistence, to be decided by the constituency associations. He pointed out that the terms of the resolution passed at the annual convention precluded the U.F.A. executive from binding the actions of these associations in advance.<sup>64</sup> This limitation on the scope of the agreement caused considerable uneasiness among League supporters that its programme would not be achieved. During April and May, while preparations for the calling of these farmer conventions were going on, fear was expressed that the demand of the Non-Partisan League for provincial as well as federal political action would be ignored. Some Non-Partisan Leaguers continued to favour leaving control over political organization in their hands and felt that the U.F.A. should confine its activities to educational matters.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>61</sup>*Calgary Herald*, March 22, 1919.

<sup>62</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, April 18, 1919, p. 7.

<sup>63</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, March 26, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, April 8, 1919, pp. 8 ff.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, May 7, 1919, p. 10.



As the debate over how the new movement should be organized gathered strength, the importance of the approaching district conventions increased. The first one was to be held at Macleod in southern Alberta. This district was a stronghold of the Non-Partisan League and of its most vociferous spokesman, James Weir, the stormy petrel of the Alberta farmers' movement. He had considerable ability as an organizer and public speaker, and he had played a prominent part in fostering the growth of a spirit of political independence among the farmers of the province. Unfortunately he possessed a sharp and sarcastic pen which often led him to write things that alienated many who were in sympathy with his ideas. He had vigorously attacked Wood and the other farm leaders because of their refusal to champion the cause of political action, and when other agrarian spokesmen defended Wood's position he remarked that it displayed a "disposition toward self-adulation and back-scratching that is becoming little short of nauseous." On the other hand, Dunham, one of Wood's leading supporters, angrily criticized Weir's position and accused him of seeking personal profit from the farmers' entry into politics.<sup>66</sup> Because of this personal antipathy along with general conflict in principles, both Weir and Wood followers recognized the crucial importance of this first convention and put forth strenuous efforts to win the support of the delegates. The Non-Partisan Leaguers declared that the reluctance of the U.F.A. to enter provincial politics was due to the close friendship between Premier Stewart and some of the leaders of the farmers' association, and the Non-Partisan League executive issued a declaration of principles on which the farmers' political action ought to be based. In essence these called for political action by a separate organization in both provincial and federal constituencies. The farmers, themselves, were to finance all political activity and the programme of reform was to be drawn up by the locals instead of by the Canadian Council of Agriculture.<sup>67</sup> In reply, Wood continued to emphasize the importance of group organization. In an article on politics in the *Grain Growers' Guide* he pointed out that the only way "purely democratic and independent political action

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 4, 1918, pp. 8, 12.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, May 22, 1919, p. 5 ff.; *Calgary Herald*, May 9, 1919.

[could] be promoted" was by keeping the farmers' movement "independent of any class or party and free from any sectional influence." He declared that the U.F.A. demand for the building up of the organization through the district associations was the most democratic method. Because the federal situation was the more immediately important, they were right to begin with it, but the provincial scene was not being neglected and a similar organization could be created later for provincial constituencies.<sup>68</sup> In order to better acquaint the farmers with his ideas he made a tour of the Macleod riding and addressed a number of U.F.A. locals on the need for local action.<sup>69</sup>

So tense was the feeling between the two factions that Herbert Greenfield who came from northern Alberta was made chairman when the two-day convention opened on May 27, 1919. All the top leaders of the Non-Partisan League were there, including W. J. Irvine, James Weir, and Mrs. L. C. McKinney. The chief debate was one between Wood and Irvine over whether the new movement should be organized as a class movement or as a political party. Wood declared that class organization was the only way the farmers could ensure democratic control of their own movement. If they widened their base to include other groups they would weaken its democratic character. Only through organization on a class basis could the movement survive. "The political stem of the U.F.A. trunk must continue to be absolutely U.F.A." Irvine rejected this viewpoint. He favoured the creation of an independent, political organization with its own press and its own platform. When the convention supported Wood's stand and adopted a resolution in favour of political action in both provincial and federal constituencies by the farmers' organization, it meant that control of this political body was to remain in the hands of the U.F.A. However, on Weir's motion a special political action committee within the U.F.A. was created. After some discussion between Wood and Weir during which Wood declared his opposition to the government ownership plank of the Farmers' Platform, a resolution was passed declaring that the new body was to be known as the "U.F.A. Political League." Its objective was the

<sup>68</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 7, 1919, p. 7.

<sup>69</sup>*Calgary Herald*, May 26, 1919.

substitution of business government for party government.<sup>70</sup> Weir, in reviewing the convention for the *Alberta Non-Partisan*, stated that Wood's objective had been to get control of the political movement through limiting membership in it to U.F.A. supporters. This group set-up Weir compared with the industrial action organization of the Russian Soviet.<sup>71</sup>

This convention represented an unqualified victory for Wood's views on how to carry out political action. The significance of this victory is increased when it is realized that Macleod was a centre of Non-Partisan League activity and that they had elected two provincial members there in 1917. Wood's success was an indication of the power of his personality and the popularity of his ideas; almost alone he had met and defeated the strongest debaters and ablest representatives of the rival body. Clearly in this district, at least, the farmers preferred the class philosophy of Wood to the party organization of his opponents. Moreover, his triumph at Macleod was only the prelude to an unbroken series of similar victories at the other district conventions. All accepted his contention that the new political movement should be confined to members of the U.F.A. and that relations with other reform elements, such as the labour movement, should be limited to co-operation. The Non-Partisan League supporters protested in vain against the rejection of their political organization by the farmer associations. Even the pathetic plea of John Glambeck to keep the name of the new political action organization the "U.F.A. Political League," rather than "Association," was rejected. The farmers were convinced that only through working together as a group could they hope to succeed. Both Irvine and Weir recognized this defeat and declared that they would devote their efforts to building up the new organization. "This amalgamation is settled. There is nothing more to be said. It is for us all to work together in harmony and unanimity for those ideals for which the League stood, and which are to be perpetuated in the U.F.A. political organization."<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 25, 1919, p. 14; *Alberta Non-Partisan*, June 5, 1919, pp. 8 ff.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, June 5, 1919, p. 7.

<sup>72</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 25, 1919, pp. 15 ff.; *Calgary Herald*, June 3, 1919; *ibid.*, June 4, 1919; *Alberta Non-Partisan*, June 5, 1919, pp. 23, 27, 28.

The East and West Calgary convention witnessed the most heated debate between the advocates of the two points of view. There were a number of urban supporters at this meeting, and a determined effort was made by R. A. Parker to have the movement in this district thrown open to all who accepted the farmers' programme. Irvine also spoke strongly in favour of co-operation between the farmers and organized labour in these two constituencies. Wood violently opposed this suggestion, and his influence was sufficient to defeat a resolution in its favour. However, the opposition did push through a resolution allowing associate members who could attend meetings but would have no right to serve as delegates or to vote in the choosing of delegates. Their membership in a local could be revoked at any time by a vote of the majority of the local.<sup>73</sup> Those limitations were adopted, largely at Wood's insistence, because of his fear that the politicians would get control and manipulate the movement in their own interests. The result was that the proposed associate membership was never used, and the farmers' political movement in East and West Calgary remained strictly an agrarian organization.

The Red Deer convention was the scene of a determined effort by the Liberal party to gain the support of the new movement by the selection of a joint farmer-Liberal candidate. A large Liberal delegation was present, and a request was made that they be allowed to present their candidate and platform. The convention rejected the request, but when Wood pointed out that this might be a death-bed repentance the delegates relented and allowed W. F. Puffer, the Liberal candidate in Lacombe provincial riding, to speak. When he had finished, Wood sharply criticized Puffer's position and asserted that as long as the Liberal party was controlled from above, co-operation between it and the farmers' movement was impossible. "We have been asked to abandon our principles for expediency in winning elections. This we can never do." He emphasized the autocratic nature of the party system and declared that "good men cannot give good results in an autocratic machine. If we give our principles to a

<sup>73</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 25, 1919, p. 17; *Alberta Non-Partisan*, June 19, 1919, p. 10; *Calgary Herald*, June 6, 1919.

man who must convey them in an autocratic vehicle they must reach an autocratic destination."<sup>74</sup>

The outcome of these U.F.A. conventions was a provincial political meeting in Calgary in July, 1919. There the directors of the district associations and the central executive of the U.F.A. discussed the question of political organization. At Wood's urging and in line with the resolutions of the various district conventions it was decided to set up a provincial political association, under the presidency of O. L. McPherson, to co-ordinate activities. The "New National Policy" was adopted as the official programme, and the new movement was to be organized along class lines.<sup>75</sup> Wood had won the first battle. Political action in Alberta was to be under the direction of the U.F.A. and was to be limited to *bona fide* farmers. The efforts of the Non-Partisan League to capture control of this new political movement had been frustrated largely because of Wood's influence. Under his direction Alberta's farmers had taken the lead in creating an instrument for political action and in adopting an aggressive attitude towards the party system of government. They were determined to change this system to a "business administration based on the fundamental principles of democracy, by which, ultimately, all schools of political thought will have due representation in the conduct of the government of the country."<sup>76</sup>

Events were soon to show that the unity proclaimed at the Calgary meeting was more apparent than real. Within the farmers' movement the quarrel remained undecided between the supporters of group organization and those who wanted to follow the example of Manitoba and Saskatchewan and create a farmers' political party. Wood had defeated the effort of the Non-Partisan League to capture control of this movement for its own ends, but he had not destroyed the idea of an independent, agrarian party. Few of the leaders of the new political association shared his views on the best way to conduct political activities. Mrs. G. F. Root, W. D. Spence, and Archie Muir, all members of the Political

<sup>74</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 25, 1919, pp. 18-22; *Calgary Herald*, June 12, 1919; *Alberta Non-Partisan*, June 19, 1919, pp. 8-10.

<sup>75</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 30, 1919, p. 4; *Calgary Herald*, July 24, 1919; *Alberta Non-Partisan*, Aug. 7, 1919, p. 10.

<sup>76</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 379.

Association executive, emphasized the farmers' determination to break away from the rule of the old parties and create their own; none of them particularly stressed the point that the new movement was to be a class one.<sup>77</sup>

The creation of this organization was widely regarded as a significant and important step which indicated clearly that the farmers of western Canada intended to pursue a policy of political independence.<sup>78</sup> In Alberta there was considerable dismay in provincial Liberal circles at the growing numbers of the U.F.A. and their announced determination to contest provincial as well as federal constituencies. The necessity of holding a by-election to fill the seat of the late C. W. Fisher, M.L.A. for Cochrane and former Speaker of the Legislature, brought the Liberal party and the U.F.A. Political Association into open conflict. Cochrane showed the strength of the farmers' desire for a political new deal as well as lack of agreement between Wood and the Political Action Association over the role of the farmers in politics.

Wood presided at a meeting on July 22, 1919, when A. A. Moore was chosen as the agrarian candidate in the forthcoming by-election. He reiterated his belief in democracy and the necessity of proper organization if this objective was to be attained. "We have to build something we have not yet got and not join with those who have nothing better to offer than destruction."<sup>79</sup> Moore was a prominent farmer and stock breeder from Dog Pound who had come to Alberta in 1907 from Bruce County, Ontario. Like many others, Moore had been raised as an old-fashioned, nineteenth-century, Canadian Liberal. He had participated in the work of the Patrons of Industry during the 1890's and had been an active member of the U.F.A. for some years.<sup>80</sup> The Liberals nominated J. Thompson, a well-known and respected farmer of the district. No less than three cabinet ministers, including Premier Stewart, attended the Liberal convention where Stewart declared that his government had always supported the farmers' interests and that no Liberal member at Edmonton had been compelled to vote for the government

<sup>77</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, Aug. 7, 1919, p. 8.

<sup>78</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 26, 1919; *Manitoba Free Press*, July 28, 1919.

<sup>79</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 13, 1919, p. 33.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 27, 1919, p. 12.



*Leonard Frank Photos*

ALBERTA POOL TERMINAL, No. 1, VANCOUVER, B.C.  
(Capacity, 5,150,000 bu.)





against his wishes. Moreover, he defended party government as the only way by which political activities could be carried on in a democracy.<sup>81</sup>

As the campaign developed it became increasingly clear that there were sharp divisions within the farmers' movement over whether Moore was the candidate of the U.F.A. as a whole or of just the Political Association. From the outset of the campaign Wood had taken an active and prominent part. At Crossfield on October 21 he delivered one of his most important speeches and gave the first clear-cut definition of his political doctrines asserting that politics should be based on class organization, not parties.<sup>82</sup> He elaborated on this in other speeches and made it clear that he regarded the election as a test of this new political idea. His stand was criticized by the *Calgary Herald* as a voicing of Soviet doctrines since it considered his idea of class government alien to British tradition and a negation of representative government.<sup>83</sup> Wood replied vigorously to this attack. He pointed out that the opposition to class politics as undemocratic was directed only against the efforts of the farmers, never against the Canadian Manufacturers' Association or other such bodies, and the only way to counteract the money power of the plutocracy was through the democratic power of the ballot box. He had no quarrel with Premier Stewart, whom he regarded as "an upright, honest and righteous man." His only conflict was with the party system which Stewart represented. He referred to the action of the government representative at the 1912 U.F.A. convention telling the farmers "to go home and slop your hogs" as an example of the regard paid to farmer complaints before the development of an effective organization. "Class organization is the only road along which civilization can travel to safety. I believe in that as I believe in God."<sup>84</sup>

The Liberals attacked Wood's ideas strongly. They accused him of fostering class antagonism and of seeking to place Alberta under the domination of a single class. They received powerful

<sup>81</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Oct. 15, 1919; *ibid.*, Oct. 16, 1919.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1919.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 22, 1919.

<sup>84</sup>H. W. Wood, "Why the U.F.A. is in Politics," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Nov. 5, 1919, pp. 16-18; *Western Independent*, Oct. 29, 1919, pp. 10-12.

reinforcement from James Weir who refused to come to the aid of Moore because of Wood's political class doctrines. He described Wood's closed-door policy as an "insult to all members of the community who cannot claim to belong to the farmers' class" and to class representation as "autocracy of the meanest and most vicious kind."<sup>85</sup> Moreover, not even all the agrarian leaders accepted Wood's theories since both Guy Johnson, secretary of the U.F.A. Political Association, and C. McFarquhar, president of the Cochrane constituency association, publicly repudiated Wood's assertion that the U.F.A. was a class movement. They also denied that it aimed at class domination. Moore, the candidate, while accepting Wood's ideas of class organization, carefully rejected any claim of class rule.<sup>86</sup>

Despite these divisions and the efforts of no less than six Liberal cabinet ministers, Moore won a decisive victory. On the eve of the election the Liberals had been confidently predicting Thompson's success by 200 votes because of the antagonism aroused by Wood's speeches. Moore, however, was elected by a majority of 145. Thompson carried the two towns in the constituency, Crossfield and Cochrane, and lost the village of Airdrie by only two votes. It was the almost solid rural vote for Moore which was the reason for his triumph.<sup>87</sup> For this result all agreed that Wood was responsible. The *Calgary Herald* declared editorially that the victory was due to the class feeling aroused by Wood, to a general revolt against the old parties, and to indifference to the Stewart government's claim that it was a farmer government. The *Manitoba Free Press* stated that Moore's success was a denial of democracy and a turn to "sovietism," but Wood interpreted it as a sign of the farmers' determination to pursue political action independent of the old party system. "No force in Canada except bayonets could have stopped the farmers exercising their franchise in the way they wished to. If Cochrane can do it every riding in Canada can."<sup>88</sup>

The Cochrane triumph, following so closely on the Assiniboia result, brought wide publicity to the farmers' revolt in Alberta

<sup>85</sup> *Albertan*, Oct., 24, 1919.

<sup>86</sup> *Calgary Herald*, Oct. 20, 1919; *ibid.*, Oct. 30, 1919; *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 756.

<sup>87</sup> *Calgary Herald*, Oct. 29, 1919; *ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1919.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1919; *Manitoba Free Press*, Nov. 5, 1919.

and to Wood's ideas of group action. There was general criticism of his doctrine as contributing to class antagonism and class legislation in Canada. Colonel Currie renewed his attack on him as a Marxist and an American Populist, while the *Manitoba Free Press* criticized Wood's philosophy as one of class selfishness.<sup>89</sup> So violent did this storm of criticism become that Crerar was forced to deny that the farmers were a class organization. In a speech at Regina on November 9, 1919, he stated that "we do not want class movements in Canada. We do not want them in the making of our laws or administration of the governmental business of the country."<sup>90</sup> Crerar's views were echoed by the agrarian leaders in Saskatchewan where J. R. Musselman, secretary of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, favoured moderation. He was opposed to the farmers entering provincial politics and had successfully persuaded the Saskatoon district association to withdraw its endorsement of a farmers' candidate in the Kindersley provincial by-election. Musselman believed that the organization had no right to enter the provincial arena without the express sanction of the annual convention because he was afraid that provincial action might disrupt the new movement and weaken the influence of the agrarian organization in federal affairs.<sup>91</sup>

Even in Alberta there were a number of prominent U.F.A. members who rejected Wood's philosophy. They sought to establish a regular political party based on the platform of the "New National Policy" and appealing to all reform and liberal elements in the country regardless of occupation. At a convention of U.F.A. local secretaries held at Calgary, criticism of Wood's stand was made. Guy Johnson, for example, attributed Moore's victory to the excellent organizing work of the local executive rather than to Wood's influence. G. R. Orchard attacked Wood for opposing proportional representation and government ownership of railways. He declared that the constitutions adopted by the constituency associations were prepared at the Central Office and foisted on the conventions by Wood. "One leader with plans that will help the next election is worth more than a thousand

<sup>89</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 17, 1919, p. 3; *ibid.*, Dec. 24, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>90</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 390.

<sup>91</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 17, 1919, p. 18.

others that have only theories.”<sup>92</sup> Wood vigorously defended his position and criticized the political association executive for trying to change the constitution of the U.F.A. and to exercise powers which they did not possess.<sup>93</sup> The columns of the *Western Independent* and the *Calgary Herald* contained a number of letters from farmers either criticizing or approving of Wood’s stand. S. Stevenson of Craigmyle, Alberta, was Wood’s most bitter critic, declaring that Wood imagined himself the “be-all” and “end-all” of the farmers’ movement. He called on the federal district conventions to repudiate Wood’s class doctrines,<sup>94</sup> and the question of political action was once more threshed out at the Lethbridge convention. In spite of criticism by many members of the Political Action Association and the accusation that he used his position as president of the U.F.A. to dictate to the political organization, Wood’s theory of group action was endorsed with only one dissenting vote.<sup>95</sup> It was apparent that his influence over the farmers’ movement in Alberta was steadily increasing and as Wood’s star was rising, that of the Political Action Association was sinking. Wood’s views had captured the imagination of rural Alberta, and the grain growers were becoming convinced that in class organization lay the solution to their economic and political difficulties. Wood, as the exponent of this theory, was regarded as the leader of the political movement in the province rather than O. L. McPherson, head of the Political Action Association.

This question of leadership was settled finally at the 1920 convention of the U.F.A. Both sides prepared for a showdown over whether the political movement was to be under the control of the U.F.A. central executive or whether it would become a completely separate movement. The convention was the largest, noisiest, and most disorderly in the history of the organization. As at Macleod, Greenfield, who was a loyal supporter of Wood, was chosen to preside. Because of the severe drought in the southern part of the province many of the delegates were in desperate economic straits and ready to follow any radical pro-

<sup>92</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 5, 1919; *Western Independent*, Dec. 31, 1919, p. 10.

<sup>93</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 6, 1919.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 26, 1919.

<sup>95</sup>*Grain Growers’ Guide*, Dec. 31, 1919, p. 3.

gramme. It says much for Wood's skill as a manager of conventions that he held this large body together and secured their overwhelming endorsement of his method of political organization. In his presidential address he pointed out that if the farmers' political movement was to succeed they must remain united and work together as a group; direction and leadership must come from the locals, and the political organization must remain firmly under the control of the farmers themselves.<sup>96</sup>

The real test of strength between the two factions came over the election of the president and the relationship between the U.F.A. executive and the Political Action Committee. Wood and Archie Muir were nominated for president, but before balloting on this matter the delegates discussed P. Baker's resolution to combine all activities of the U.F.A.—social, educational, economic, and political—under the direction of the central executive. Wood declared that the Political Action Committee had attempted to dictate to him and tell him what to say. During the Cochrane by-election they had ordered him not to talk about organization. There could not be two masters within the movement, and if the resolution was adopted it would mean that the U.F.A. board of directors would not be "interfered with by any other body." McPherson replied by asserting that Wood's ideas on group government were not representative of the feelings of the U.F.A. Wood then appealed to the convention for endorsement, and by an almost unanimous vote the Baker resolution was adopted.<sup>97</sup>

With the settlement of this question the convention then proceeded to the election of a president. Muir attacked those critics who felt that he was too young for the job. He pointed out that the president was also the head of the political movement and "I sit up at night, Mr. Chairman, wondering what happens to our organization if our president should die." Wood retorted that he would not be sixty until next May and that he expected to live to be one hundred years old. When the voting was over Wood had been triumphantly re-elected with 1,058 votes to Muir's 202.<sup>98</sup> The most serious threat to his position as president during

<sup>96</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1920, p. 9.

<sup>97</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1920, pp. 19, 20, 47.

<sup>98</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1920, p. 809; *Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 28, 1920, p. 47.

his fifteen year tenure in the office had been beaten. This victory had been the result, partly of his ability as an organizer, and partly of his widespread popularity among both the men and women members of the U.F.A. But most of all it had been due to the confidence in his honesty of purpose and to a belief that with him the welfare of the organization came first. The strength of this feeling was illustrated during the course of a further debate over the wisdom of class organization. One delegate named Keough accused him of stating that group organization meant class legislation. Wood denied this. He readily admitted that he favoured "economic class organization up to the highest point of efficiency [but] I am absolutely opposed to class legislation or class domination." When Keough persisted in his accusation, Wood appealed to the convention and received an overwhelming vote of confidence.<sup>99</sup>

Wood's success at this convention was the real turning point in the history of the farmers' political revolt in western Canada. At a time when Manitoba and Saskatchewan were following the course of previous agrarian movements and setting up farmers' political parties, the Alberta grain growers were accepting the ideas of Henry Wise Wood and creating a genuine class party whose membership was to be based on the U.F.A. and not on an independent political association. The adoption of the Baker resolution not only killed the idea of independent political action but meant that leadership in the farmers' movement in Alberta was to be in the hands of Wood and his loyal U.F.A. executive. It was because of his dominant position in Alberta that he was able to exercise such a great influence within the farmers' movement as a whole. The Alberta delegation within the Progressive party always regarded itself more as representatives of the farmers as a class than as members of an agrarian political party. Wood's philosophy inspired them to feel that they owed their loyalty to him and the U.F.A. and not to Crerar and the Progressives. He had created the class organization which was to dominate federal and provincial affairs in the province until 1935.

For Alberta the period from 1918 to the U.F.A. convention of 1920 is concerned primarily with Wood's successful struggle

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1920, p. 51.

against those in the province who favoured the setting up of another political party. The Non-Partisan Leaguers, the supporters of the Political Action Association, and those who favoured a Liberal-Progressive alliance, all thought of the agrarian revolt as just another reform movement. This was not Wood's conception. He believed that political action was only one part of a campaign the ultimate purpose of which would be the replacement of the present competitive society by a co-operative one organized on an economic class basis. This vision gave his support of political action a moral character which enabled him to exercise an unrivalled influence over the farmers' political movement in Alberta. The unity attained by the grain growers of Alberta was unique. Alone among the three western provinces the Alberta political revolt was closely linked with the farmers' educational organization and later with their economic association. There was no division of effort, and none of the conflict for control between rival farm leaders which so disrupted the movement in the other provinces. Wood's victory was so complete and overwhelming that none dared challenge his authority. For the next ten years the history of the farmers' movement in the province is the biography of Henry Wise Wood.

## WOOD AND THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY, 1921-5

AS A RESULT of the U.F.A. convention of 1920 Wood was now securely in command of the farmers' provincial political organization. His authority was strengthened by the adoption of a resolution at the Canadian Council of Agriculture political conference which handed over the method of political organization to the control of each provincial association.<sup>1</sup> This meant that as long as Wood could retain the loyalty of the U.F.A. members his political position was safe both in Alberta and in the agrarian political organization as a whole. He became the natural leader of all those in the Progressive party who believed that the farmers should remain a purely agrarian political movement and who opposed the "broadening-out" formula of Crerar as a betrayal of the grain growers' interests. Throughout this period Wood and Crerar waged a bitter conflict over the best method of achieving agrarian reforms, and the failure to reconcile their disparate points of view was an important factor in the eventual disruption of the Progressive party. Out of the ruins of this movement Wood and the farmers' party in Alberta emerged unscathed and under the banner of group action continued to dominate Alberta politics for another decade.

The strength of Wood's position lay in the effective political instrument which he found in the U.F.A. organization and its province-wide network of local associations. Once the power of the political action committee had been ended Wood shrewdly devoted his efforts towards expanding the membership of the U.F.A. because he recognized that if that body was to control the

<sup>1</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Jan. 6, 1920.



political movement it must include a substantial nucleus of the farmers of the province. Therefore, as soon as the annual convention was over, he began an intensive campaign aimed at convincing the farmers of the superiority of the group system of political action over the party system. In an article in the *Western Independent* he severely criticized the old methods as inadequate and undemocratic, describing them as a mass organization of individuals without any common purpose, interest, or idea. It was a partizan's, not a people's, movement. A political association, to retain the support of the people, must be based on their common economic interests. The economic group he thought the most efficient means of maintaining democratic activity. The new farmers' movement must strive through education to create this spirit of co-operation among the agrarian class. "Water cannot rise above its source, neither can social progress rise higher than the level of the citizenship of the people."<sup>2</sup>

During the spring and summer of 1920 he attended a number of U.F.A. district conventions where he pointed out the advantages of group organization over the undemocratic methods of the political party, and appealed to the feeling for democracy and agrarian unity which was very strong among the Alberta farmers. Alberta, like western Kansas in the 1880's, was still in the frontier stage of development and his arguments were received with the same wild enthusiasm that greeted the speeches of "Sockless" Jerry Simpson and Mary Lease with her exhortation to the farmers "to raise less corn and more hell." Speaking before the Bow River convention Wood declared that "if you dropped the farmers' organization, I should not join a political party, but would vote with some other group that is highly organized and efficient. . . To include two economic viewpoints in one organization would cause resistance and weaken the power of both in their struggle against the plutocratic classes. . . There is no real power in money, power is in the vote."<sup>3</sup>

The ovation which Wood received wherever he spoke showed that the majority of the farmers of the province were in agree-

<sup>2</sup>H. W. Wood, "Party System Inadequate," *Western Independent*, Feb. 18, 1920, p. 12; *ibid.*, Feb. 25, 1920, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 4, 1920, p. 10.

ment with him. Membership in the U.F.A rose by leaps and bounds and one district convention after another adopted resolutions endorsing Wood's ideas and limiting participation in the organization of the political movement to U.F.A. members. So apparent was Wood's domination of the political drive that A. C. Muir, the leading spokesman of the political party method, resigned from the executive in July, ostensibly owing to the pressure of farm work.<sup>4</sup> By October more than 10,000 new members had been enrolled and plans were announced for a gigantic fall drive for additional recruits and for money to finance the expanded activities of the association. Each farmer was to be asked to contribute \$6 of which \$2 would cover his U.F.A. membership, \$2 would go for a year's subscription to the *Grain Growers' Guide*, \$1 for political expenses, and \$1 for organization expenses.<sup>5</sup> An elaborate scheme of operation was worked out. A three man organization committee directed the drive, and a constituency board was established for each of the twelve federal ridings. In each riding a paid organizer was placed in charge while in turn the constituency was divided into districts, each under a district captain. He was responsible for recruiting canvassers, on the basis of one for every half township, who would visit every farmer in that unit.<sup>6</sup> This drive was conducted all through the winter of 1920-1 with gratifying results. When it closed at the end of February, membership in the U.F.A. and U.F.W.A. had risen to over 29,000. Support for the drive had been strongest in the south and weakest in the north showing an almost direct ratio between the percentage of the objective achieved by the various constituencies and the visits of Wood.<sup>7</sup>

The success of the movement in the south, however, was not due entirely to Wood's influence since the south had been particularly hard hit by drought and by the exclusion of cattle from the American market under the Fordney Emergency Tariff.<sup>8</sup> The spirit of political revolt was burning very brightly in this region as the Medicine Hat by-election was soon to demonstrate. The

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, July 28, 1920, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 6, 1920, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 20, 1920, pp. 20-1.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, March 2, 1921, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1921, p. 814.

chief hope of the farmers of this section was the development of irrigation projects which would remove them from dependence on the uncertain rainfall in the area. But the attempt to sell the bonds of the Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District had not been very successful until the provincial government had guaranteed principal and interest.<sup>9</sup> The difficulty of this body in getting under way and the need for government assistance which its career demonstrated convinced many farmers that the new farmers' political movement offered the best hope of securing adequate provincial and federal aid in solving their economic troubles.

The serious economic condition of the wheat growers was aggravated by a sharp rise in manufacturing and transportation costs with the close of the war. At the same time agricultural prices, under the stimulus of renewed Argentinian and Australian competition, began to fall. The farmers were caught between the upper millstone of falling farm income and the lower millstone of rising expenditures because of higher costs for transportation, farm implements, and agricultural labour. The action of the government in granting the railways' request for a 30 per cent rate increase despite the vigorous protest of all western provincial governments provoked strong and angry protests from all the agrarian organizations.<sup>10</sup> Wood recognized the seriousness of this situation, and it was one reason why he attacked the party system so vehemently. He criticized the sharp increase in railway rates granted by the Board of Railway Commissioners as unjustified and declared that the government showed more concern for the welfare of the railways than it did for the welfare of the farmers. He also accused Frank Carvell, one of the Commissioners, of being hostile to the farmers' position and strongly biased in favour of the railways. He pointed out that at the new rates the railways received \$4.51 per acre gross profit for hauling oats to Fort William while the farmer would get only \$2.72 gross profit.<sup>11</sup> Before the tariff commission he opposed protection and blamed the slower growth of agriculture as compared with manufacturing on the tariff. He declared that only industries suitable to Canadian resources and economy should be aided by protective tariffs because

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 1921, pp. 819-20.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 1920, pp. 319-24.

<sup>11</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, April 21, 1921; *Calgary Herald*, Sept. 15, 1920.

industries able to sell abroad competitively did not need it. He emphasized that what the farmer wanted was not special privileges but a "square deal."<sup>12</sup>

The 1921 annual convention of the U.F.A. showed the effect of Wood's attack on the accepted political and economic institutions of the country. In his presidential address before the over 1500 delegates and friends who were present, he pointed out the serious economic hardships that the farmers suffered from and appealed to them to find their own solutions by co-operation within the farmer organizations.<sup>13</sup> Wood was unanimously re-elected president and his views on political organization endorsed. In fact the two chief matters discussed by the meeting were how to improve the wheat marketing machinery and the extent of political action. The latter debate was concerned primarily with whether to organize on a provincial basis or confine their activities, as in Saskatchewan, to federal affairs. Eventually a resolution was carried declaring "that this convention of United Farmers of Alberta, here assembled, do recommend the adoption of this action in every provincial constituency."<sup>14</sup> With Wood's support another resolution was passed establishing U.F.A. district associations in each federal constituency, made up of all U.F.A. locals in the constituency and replacing the old political district conventions.<sup>15</sup> This action was one more step in the direction of tighter control by the U.F.A. over agrarian political activities in the province. Other resolutions showed the strong influence of American political experience and especially of the progressive movement there. Resolutions were passed in favour of the election of Senators, the fixing of a set election date for both federal and provincial elections, the use of the referendum and recall, the introduction of proportional representation and the transferable vote, and allowing provincial members to adopt an independent attitude on public bills.<sup>16</sup>

The "political fever" which was sweeping over the farmers of the province soon found an outlet in something more practical than convention resolutions. This lay in the announcement that

<sup>12</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Oct. 5, 1920.

<sup>13</sup>United Farmers of Alberta, *Annual Report*, 1921, pp. 5-8.

<sup>14</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 26, 1921, p. 23.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 26, 1921, p. 35.

<sup>16</sup>United Farmers of Alberta, *Annual Report*, 1921, pp. 53-62.

a by-election was to take place in Medicine Hat constituency in June. This constituency contained the city of Medicine Hat and the town of Redcliff whose protectionist sympathies were expected to roll up a large government vote for the Conservative candidate, Nelson Spencer.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, the U.F.A. was strongly entrenched in the district with some 200 locals and approximately 5,000 members and there were 319 delegates at the farmers' convention which nominated Robert Gardiner of Excel, a member of the agrarian movement since 1905 and a person with considerable experience in municipal politics.<sup>18</sup> Since Gardiner was chosen as a U.F.A. representative and not as a representative of the national Progressive party, it was obvious that this was to be another contest between the older political party system and the new group action theories of Wood.<sup>19</sup> Wood had attended the Medicine Hat convention, but he had carefully refrained from interfering with the action of the convention until after Gardiner had been nominated. Then he had addressed the delegates on the necessity of remaining loyal to their class. He opposed the proposed fusion of farmers and labour behind Gardiner and the adoption of a compromise platform as dangerous to the future of the farmer movement. He wanted no "mongrel" organization and declared that it would be a serious mistake to leave "the rock bottom of economic class organization."<sup>20</sup> In an article in the *Grain Growers' Guide* reviewing the Medicine Hat convention, Wood reiterated his opposition to the "open door" policy of Crerar and the Manitoba Progressives. "Every time the door of the farmers' organization has been opened, nobody has walked through it into the organization, but the entire membership of the organization has walked out. No farmers' organization has survived the 'open door.'"<sup>21</sup> Nor did he confine his activities merely to articles, for he spent some time in the constituency helping to perfect the U.F.A. organization and he visited many rural communities in the riding where he spoke on the advantages of group co-operation and solidarity.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, April 14, 1921.

<sup>18</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, April 6, 1921, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup>Letter of G. E. G. Phillips in the *Calgary Herald*, June 4, 1921.

<sup>20</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, April 6, 1921, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup>H. W. Wood, "Democracy in Action," *ibid.*, April 13, 1921, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup>*Calgary Herald*, June 22, 1921.

The campaign was a bitter and strenuous one. Gardiner attacked the Conservative's tariff policy and appealed for farmer support along the class lines advocated by Wood. The U.F.A. set up an efficient system for reaching the individual farmer. Picnics were held at which horse-racing and baseball contests were used as bait to attract crowds. Gardiner, Wood, and the other farm leaders would then give political speeches as well.<sup>23</sup> The Conservatives sought to appeal to the Labour, Liberal, and protectionist vote in the riding by raising the tariff question and denouncing the agrarian leaders as being "associates of seditionists" and "dangerous men teaching dangerous doctrines." Conservative supporters even offered bribes of peanuts and candy to the farm children at these U.F.A. picnics if they would tell their parents to vote for Spencer.<sup>24</sup> Despite these efforts and the presence of the Federal Conservative organizer, Spencer was not only beaten, but lost his deposit. The Liberals were generally neutral, and Labour supported the U.F.A. As a result, Gardiner carried even the city of Medicine Hat by 300 votes.<sup>25</sup>

The news of the U.F.A. triumph created a sensation not only in Alberta, but throughout Canada. Gardiner's election was attributed primarily to the strength of the U.F.A. organization and to the popularity of Wood's concept of group government among the farmers. Herbert Greenfield, one of the U.F.A. leaders in the campaign, stated that the result was a victory for progressive thought and the idea of carrying out political action as an organized economic class.<sup>26</sup> Gardiner declared that the victory was due to organization and the co-operation of the farmers and their wives as a group.<sup>27</sup> Editorials quoted by the *Manitoba Free Press* in July indicated that the Medicine Hat result was considered a sign of growing western unrest and displeasure with the Meighen administration. It was the loss of this by-election which apparently convinced Meighen that the time had come to call a federal election rather than wait for another meeting of Parliament which would have necessitated a redistribution bill and an increase in

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, June 24, 1921.

<sup>24</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, June 15, 1921, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, July 6, 1921, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup>*Calgary Herald*, June 28, 1921.

<sup>27</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 6, 1921, p. 3.

the number of western ridings.<sup>28</sup> Despite the cries of alarm in the eastern press it was clear that the new movement was not dominated by wild-eyed radicals. Gardiner was a canny Scotsman of considerable ability who, though not a great orator, impressed all who heard him as a person of sound judgment and judicial temperament. From the outset he was recognized as the leader of the Alberta delegation in the House of Commons. Within the Progressive party he combined an unflinching loyalty to the principles of group government and to the interests of the farmers of Alberta with a willingness to compromise on other issues which helped hold together the Progressive party in the critical period following Crerar's resignation.

Even before the Medicine Hat campaign was over Wood and the farmers' organization were involved in an even more serious test with the announcement by Premier Stewart on June 23 of a provincial general election. Membership in the U.F.A. was growing rapidly and now included over a third of the farmers in the province. Stewart, apparently, hoped to win power for four more years by calling a snap election before the U.F.A. could build up their provincial organization because, although the U.F.A. had decided to undertake provincial as well as federal political action, they had actually established an organization in only sixteen of the sixty-one provincial ridings by June 23, 1921.<sup>29</sup> Wood criticized the government's announcement as a "tactical blunder" and at once set in motion plans for completing the organization of the rural constituencies and the nomination of U.F.A. candidates.<sup>30</sup>

This provincial election was extremely important for the new political movement. The Stewart government had been consistently favourable towards farmer demands in such fields as irrigation, public health, the construction of railways to open up northern Alberta, the adoption of prohibition, and the introduction of the referendum. During the last session of the Legislature, the opposition of the U.F.A. had been sufficient to cause the government to withdraw a bill allowing a subsidiary of Imperial Oil, Imperial Pipe-Lines Limited, to construct pipe-lines in the province. Moreover, Stewart, himself, was personally very popular

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 7, 1921, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 17, 1921, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup>*Calgary Herald*, June 24, 1921.

with the farmers, and he was returned unopposed in his own constituency.<sup>81</sup> The Conservative opposition was badly disorganized and enjoyed little support outside the cities of Edmonton and Calgary. George Hoadley, one of the leading Conservatives, had withdrawn from the party because of its lack of consideration of rural interests and was now campaigning as a supporter of the U.F.A.<sup>82</sup> During the election the Conservatives largely confined their campaign to the urban constituencies and left rural Alberta to be contested by the Liberals and the farmers.

The chief issues of the campaign as far as the U.F.A. was concerned were Wood's theory of group organization and the undemocratic character of the old party system. On July 2 an official declaration of principles was issued by the U.F.A. which explicitly endorsed Wood's method and declared that "we are a group of citizens going into political action as an organization. Each elected candidate is answerable to the organization in the constituency that elected him."<sup>83</sup> The farmers condemned the government for its failure to enforce effectively the prohibition act and for allowing political considerations to influence its operation.<sup>84</sup> The U.F.A. platform was based on the resolutions adopted at the 1921 convention, with special emphasis on the statement that no government should resign except on a direct vote of want of confidence.<sup>85</sup> This was popular because the farmers were convinced that one of the most undemocratic features of the party system was the secret caucus and the domination of the party by the cabinet. They believed that greater independence would be achieved if the individual members could vote for or against a measure without at the same time necessarily bringing about the downfall of the government.<sup>86</sup>

Wood, as president of the U.F.A. and spokesman of the theory of agrarian group politics, was the unofficial leader of the formally leaderless U.F.A. candidates. He travelled widely

<sup>81</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1921, pp. 838 ff.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, 1921, p. 850.

<sup>83</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 2, 1921.

<sup>84</sup>*Western Independent*, March 24, 1920, p. 6.

<sup>85</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 17, 1921, p. 22.

<sup>86</sup>For a fuller discussion of this point see W. L. Morton, "Western Progressive Movement and Cabinet Domination," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XII, May, 1946, pp. 136-47.



throughout the province, explaining his beliefs and helping to organize local conventions to choose the farmers' candidate. Despite the handicap of the shortness of time between the announcement of the election and the polling day (three weeks), the province-wide organization of the U.F.A. enabled the new group to play an effective role and, under Wood's direction, more than forty candidates were put in the field by July 11.<sup>37</sup> The farmers responded to his leadership with tremendous enthusiasm. In Didsbury constituency, for example, it was discovered that the polling lists were padded and that there was an insufficient number of U.F.A. supporters to serve as scrutineers in all the polling booths. A call for aid was sent out to the neighbouring rural area and by 2 A.M. over twenty farmers had assembled, ready to act as scrutineers.<sup>38</sup> Even Wood was surprised at the extent of farmer enthusiasm displayed. At the outset of the campaign he had predicted that the new party would win approximately twenty seats.<sup>39</sup> By election day, however, he was confident that the farmers would carry a majority of the constituencies and he sent a telegram to J. E. Brownlee, chief solicitor of the U.F.A., who was on a visit to Vancouver, to return at once. "Tide running high. Services be required. Be ready."<sup>40</sup>

Wood was right. The U.F.A. won a decisive victory, capturing thirty-nine of the sixty-one seats in the provincial assembly. All agreed that the chief architect of this triumph was Wood because his philosophy of group participation had been the core of the farmers' platform, and the U.F.A. organization, which was largely his creation, had been responsible for the extent of the victory. Wood's domination of the provincial political scene was demonstrated, too, by the rejection of James Weir and Mrs. L. C. McKinney, the old Non-Partisan Leaguers, in favour of *bona fide* U.F.A. members in Nanton and Claresholm.<sup>41</sup>

Because of Wood's importance to the U.F.A. victory, it was suggested that he should accept the premiership and become in name as well as in fact the head of the first farmer government

<sup>37</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 11, 1921.

<sup>38</sup>Letter of I. U. MacLennan in *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 7, 1921, p. 15.

<sup>39</sup>*Albertan*, July 11, 1921.

<sup>40</sup>Interview with J. E. Brownlee, July 20, 1948.

<sup>41</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 6, 1921; *ibid.*, July 7, 1921.

of Alberta.<sup>42</sup> Wood, however, stated that the choice of the premier would have to be left up to the elected U.F.A. representatives meeting in Calgary with the executive of the U.F.A. During the week which elapsed between the election and this meeting rumours about the premiership filled the Calgary papers.<sup>43</sup> The most popular choices, apart from Wood, were George Hoadley and Herbert Greenfield. At the meeting which took place on July 26, Wood refused the premiership because he did not feel competent to accept it owing to his American background. He wanted Brownlee for the position, but the other members objected because Brownlee was a lawyer and not a farmer. Since Hoadley was unacceptable to Wood because of his previous close connection with the Conservative party, Greenfield was selected. He was a successful farmer from northern Alberta—a choice which would please the northern part of the province where the U.F.A. movement was weakest. He had considerable experience in municipal politics both in Alberta and Ontario, and one of the most loyal supporters of Wood's political philosophy, he had taken an active part in the Medicine Hat by-election as well as in the provincial campaign.<sup>44</sup> In declining the premiership Wood made it clear that the new government was to be absolutely on its own as far as the U.F.A. and himself were concerned. "Put them in office, leave them alone and let them do it" summed up his viewpoint, and he was opposed to any dictation to the government by the U.F.A. organization. The power and responsibility of government both were in the hands of the provincial farmer members, and he expected Greenfield to be premier in fact as well as in name.<sup>45</sup>

The completeness of the U.F.A. victory put Wood in the front rank among the leaders of the agrarian revolt. Hitherto Crerar had been looked upon as the sole outstanding figure within the agrarian organization, but now he was forced to share this position with the Alberta leader. The contrast between the two leaders of the new movement was striking. Wood was a philosopher

<sup>42</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, July 19, 1921.

<sup>43</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 19, 1921; *ibid.*, July 20, 1921; *ibid.*, July 25, 1921; *Albertan*, July 26, 1921.

<sup>44</sup>Interview with J. E. Brownlee, July 20, 1948; George Hoadley, July 6, 1948; *Calgary Herald*, July 28, 1921.

<sup>45</sup>Interview with J. E. Brownlee, July 20, 1948 and W. Norman Smith, July 16, 1948.

turned political leader—interested largely in the development of the ideal of co-operation and of unity among the farmers. He was determined to maintain the grass-roots nature of the agrarian revolt and to prevent it from being turned into just another third party. To Wood principles were more important than the achievement of specific reforms. Crerar was a business man turned party leader. He had already won wide acclaim for able and successful managing of the Grain Growers' Grain Company and its successor, the United Grain Growers' Limited. It was the pressure of the war which had brought him into politics where he rapidly reached the top as the leading spokesman of western liberalism. Crerar regarded the farmers' movement as an attempt to revive the economic and political ideals of Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and W. E. Gladstone. Unlike Wood he sought to turn this political upheaval into a genuine liberal party, appealing to all reform elements in Canada. Unlike Wood, too, he was willing to collaborate with the older political parties to gain worthwhile legislation. The difference in point of view between these two figures and the popularity of Wood's philosophy in Alberta introduced from the start the disruptive question of whether this new organization was going to develop as an economic class movement or as a political party.

During 1920 and 1921 the drive towards independent political action had gathered increased momentum in all the western provinces. In Manitoba the United Farmers of Manitoba had endorsed political action and had established a political committee under D. G. Mackenzie. Although not formally endorsed by the U.F.M., thirteen farmer candidates were elected in the 1920 provincial election. Similar progress was taking place in Saskatchewan where a determined drive towards the creation of an independent agrarian party in federal affairs was reported.<sup>46</sup> In contrast with Alberta, however, neither farmer association officially entered federal or provincial politics. In both provinces those who favoured the separation of educational and political activities were in control. At the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association convention, Musselman led the fight against group action. He called on the farmers to support the "New National

<sup>46</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1920, pp. 741 ff.

Policy" and to work for the creation of a broad reform party which would give adequate recognition to the solution of their difficulties.<sup>47</sup> At the meeting of the Canadian Council of Agriculture in July, 1919, there had been a bitter debate over the question of whether to organize on a group or a party basis. Wood had vehemently attacked the Musselman-Cowan resolution on political action because it favoured the creation of an interprovincial party, and the solicitation of support from non-agrarian elements. Because of his opposition and that of the Alberta delegation, the resolution was withdrawn.<sup>48</sup>

In the course of the argument Crerar and Wood openly clashed over how agrarian political action was to be carried on. Crerar wanted the farmers to set up a national organization and to adopt a national outlook. He was against the formation of provincial political parties because the Prairie governments were responsive to farmer demands and, therefore, provincial farmer administrations were unnecessary. He attacked the class organization ideas of Wood as creating divisions between the farmers and other reform elements which would seriously weaken the effectiveness of the new movement. Wood, however, was determined that the farmers' revolt would not become just another futile third party. He believed that it was a mistake to build the new organization around a party platform which must necessarily be imperfect. The only way to achieve permanent reforms was to organize a purely agrarian economic group.<sup>49</sup>

The influence of the Alberta group was strong enough to prevent the creation of a special committee of the Council to coordinate political activities, and, instead, political control was left in the hands of the provincial associations. Wood failed, however, when he attempted to have the motion endorsing Crerar as the national agrarian leader rescinded.<sup>50</sup> Throughout 1920 Crerar campaigned energetically for the establishment of a progressive rather than a class party and he repudiated the claim that the farmers were going into politics for selfish class reasons.

<sup>47</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 18, 1920, pp. 13-15.

<sup>48</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, April 1, 1919; *ibid.*, April 2, 1919; *ibid.*, July 10, 1919.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1921.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, July 14, 1920; *ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1920.

Speaking in Winnipeg on December 10, he asserted that the farmer M.P.'s considered themselves representatives of all the people of their constituencies and not just of the rural population. He declared that the object of the new movement was to establish a "people's party" which would press for such worthwhile general reforms as the reduction of freight rates, revaluation of railway capitalization, and government ownership of natural monopolies. He laid particular emphasis on the need for tariff reform as the central demand of the new movement.<sup>51</sup>

Under Crerar's leadership the new Progressive party was developing as a radical movement somewhat to the left of the Liberals, and as a result Mackenzie King, the new Liberal leader, called on the farmer and labour groups to unite against the Conservatives whom he declared were controlled by a "small circle, a sort of little oligarchy of interwoven financial, manufacturing, transportation and distributing interests, prepared . . . to use their wealth and influence to keep the administration in power . . . and . . . constituting . . . the real though invisible government of this country."<sup>52</sup> Arthur Meighen, the Conservative Prime Minister, recognized this development when he referred to the Progressives as the "servile tools and minions" of the Liberal party.<sup>53</sup> Since this close identification of the Liberals and the Progressives was the very thing that Wood was so vigorously campaigning against in Alberta and within the farmer movement at large, he became increasingly alarmed at the pro-Liberal actions of the other farm leaders. Before the provincial election, overtures had been made to Wood to induce him or one of his chief lieutenants to enter the Alberta Cabinet, but he had refused on the ground that "we can go to no open political party."<sup>54</sup> When Maharg, president of the S.G.G.A., had become a member of the Martin Liberal administration Wood had criticized his action because it meant a compromise with a political party. Wood's victories in Alberta in the summer of 1921 made it clear that not all farmers were willing to go along with Crerar and his doctrine of the "new liberalism."

<sup>51</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Dec. 11, 1920; *Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 20, 1920, p. 7.

<sup>52</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1921, vol. 4, p. 3603.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 3324.

<sup>54</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 25, 1921, p. 20.

In spite of the wide divergence in point of view over the proper political course to pursue between the Wood and Crerar factions, the Progressives entered the federal election campaign with high hopes. The long string of by-election victories which had been climaxed by the smashing success of Gardiner in Medicine Hat, the strength of the new party in Manitoba and its electoral triumphs in Ontario and Alberta, all made the Progressive leaders confident of making wide inroads into Liberal and Conservative representation in Ontario and the Prairie Provinces. The loose organization of the party with its emphasis on provincial control of the organization enabled the Wood and Crerar wings to avoid an intra-party conflict which might have ruined the new movement. They differed over organization but not programme, for both sides accepted the "New National Policy" platform drawn up by the Canadian Council of Agriculture in 1918 as the official agrarian position. Wood, however, emphasized those aspects of it which dealt with providing greater democracy and greater local control over the members of Parliament; Crerar was concerned primarily with the farmers' stand on the tariff question.

From the beginning of the campaign it was clear that as far as Alberta was concerned, Wood and not Crerar was the real leader of the farmers' party. Early in September a meeting was held in Edmonton where Wood, Crerar, Lambert, Chipman and Hull discussed plans for the forthcoming election. When Crerar attempted to dictate the course which the farmers were to follow on the ground that he was the party leader, Wood replied bluntly, "By God, Crerar, you are not my leader."<sup>55</sup> Crerar was forced to recognize the truth of this assertion and to leave the conduct of the campaign in Alberta to Wood and the U.F.A.<sup>56</sup> As far as that province was concerned, the farmer representatives were to be the nominees of an economic group and not the candidates of a political party. When Dr. Michael Clark, Crerar's chief lieutenant in the House of Commons, refused to accept these conditions and denounced Wood's philosophy as fostering a selfish "class" party, he was ruthlessly discarded by the farmers of Red Deer constituency.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup>Interview with J. T. Hull, Aug. 28, 1948.

<sup>56</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Sept. 15, 1921.

<sup>57</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1921, p. 474.

While Crerar was declaring that "I do not believe in class legislation, nor do I believe in class domination," Wood was striving to increase the class consciousness of the individual farmer. At Macleod constituency convention he warned that the next four years would be crucial ones for the farmer and declared that the only way to protect against exploitation by the "organized interests" was to develop a counter-organization. The farmers' only salvation lay in group co-operation on an economic class basis.<sup>58</sup> Under the inspiration of Wood's personality and ideas none but supporters of his philosophy were nominated in Alberta. In East and West Calgary, where the farmers were only a small minority, the U.F.A. constituency conventions, at Wood's suggestion, decided to support the Labour candidate, William Irvine, in the former and a non-party candidate, J. T. Shaw, in the latter. Wood, himself, had been offered the nomination in West Calgary, but he refused it on the ground that he was more valuable as head of the U.F.A. than as a member of Parliament.<sup>59</sup> In every other constituency the U.F.A. conventions chose a member of the association, and every effort was made to ensure complete freedom and democracy in the choice of the candidate. In Strathcona the nomination of R. J. Manson over Rice Sheppard was thrown out because some locals were over-represented, and a new convention was held at which D. W. Warner was chosen as the official candidate.<sup>60</sup>

Both Meighen and Mackenzie King sharply criticized the Alberta doctrine as fostering a dangerous class movement. At Calgary on November 15, King stated that "the greatest danger this country faces to-day is group control, according to district or by geography."<sup>61</sup> Both emphasized that the tariff was the main political issue, and in this Crerar agreed with them. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba the farmer candidates were nominated at conventions held independently of the provincial farmer associations, and Crerar campaigned as the leader of the only party willing and able to carry out its low tariff pledge. Wood, however, said that the main issue was whether plutocratic or democratic groups would control the government and that,

<sup>58</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 5, 1921, p. 27.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 12, 1921, p. 35.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, Oct. 12, 1921, p. 14.

<sup>61</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1921, p. 462.

through economic class organization, the farmers would find the political and economic means to end exploitation by capitalistic interests.<sup>62</sup> The popularity of Wood's theories among the Alberta farmers is illustrated by this doggerel poem from the Ghost Pine Creek local. It was sung to the tune of "Dolly Gray":

It's time to say good-bye, U.F.A.  
 There's no need to tell him why, U.F.A.  
 There's a murmur in the air  
 He may hear it everywhere  
 Let him doubt it if he dare, U.F.A.

*Chorus:*

Good-bye, Meighen, you must leave us  
 Tho' it break your year to go  
 Something tells us you're not needed  
 Any more to run the show.  
 See, your bosses now are waiting,  
 And you'd better not delay.  
 Hark! The people's voice is calling,  
 Come on U.F.A.<sup>63</sup>

By December 1, Wood was predicting confidently that all U.F.A.-endorsed candidates would win. On election day this prediction was fulfilled 100 per cent when the new movement captured all twelve federal seats. Only in Calgary West, where R. B. Bennett was defeated by sixteen votes, was the result close. In seven constituencies all the opposition candidates lost their deposits through failing to poll 50 per cent of the vote of the winning candidate. Altogether, sixteen candidates lost their deposits, including Rice Sheppard in Strathcona who had run as a Labour candidate when refused the U.F.A. nomination.<sup>64</sup> Wood attributed this result to the wisdom of the political principles on which the U.F.A. political action was based and the excellent farmer organization which had been built up during the past two years.<sup>65</sup> In every constituency the U.F.A. had set up a committee whose duty it was to contact every farmer and, as a result, an almost solid farmer vote was polled in support of the agrarian candidate.

<sup>62</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 22, 1921.

<sup>63</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Nov. 16, 1921, p. 15.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1921, p. 4.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1922, p. 8.



The very magnitude of the U.F.A. achievement spelt trouble for the unity of the agrarian movement. From the outset the Alberta M.P.'s regarded themselves as U.F.A. representatives and not as Progressives and they tended to follow the path laid out for them by the resolutions of the U.F.A. conventions or Wood's speeches rather than the programme of the Progressive party. The Alberta group differed sharply with the rest of the party and its parliamentary leaders on several major issues—notably banking reform, the restoration of the Wheat Board, and group organization. This difference in outlook first became important at the Saskatoon conference in December, 1921, where the Alberta delegation played a major part in defeating the attempt of Crerar and others to fuse with the Liberals on the basis of tariff reductions, return of the natural resources to the Prairie Provinces, retention of the government-owned railways, and Progressive representation in the Cabinet. Because of the opposition of the rank and file Progressive M.P.'s, led by the Alberta delegation, the project was abandoned. The Alberta representatives felt that to enter such a coalition was to deny the philosophy of the organization responsible for their election to Parliament.<sup>66</sup> This decision was endorsed in a resolution of the U.F.A. opposing the affiliation of the Progressives with any other political party.<sup>67</sup> Wood attacked this idea in an article on the "Efficient Citizenship Group" in the *Grain Growers' Guide* in which he stated that the way to solve the economic and social problems of the day was through the co-operation of organized groups. The political party system was "doomed to futility" because it was based on the false social doctrine of competition. If the farmers were to rely on the independent political party to solve their problems, they would fail and wreck their organization in the process. Only through co-operation among economic classes organized on a group basis could a solution be found because "the voice of the group will become the voice of the people."<sup>68</sup>

The strength of this feeling on the subject of group action was clearly manifested by two actions of the 1922 U.F.A. con-

<sup>66</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Dec. 17, 1921; *ibid.*, Dec. 20, 1921.

<sup>67</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 1, 1922, p. 17.

<sup>68</sup>H. W. Wood, "The Efficient Citizenship Group," *Grain Growers' Guide*, March 22, 1922, p. 3; *ibid.*, March 29, 1922, p. 3.

vention. One was the passage of a resolution stating explicitly that no member of the federal or provincial legislatures could become a member of the Board of Directors of the U.F.A.<sup>69</sup> This showed that the farmers were determined to keep their political representatives subordinate to the officers of the organization and to avoid the experience of the Saskatchewan farmers' association. In that province the close connection between their executive and the provincial Liberal government had blocked the emergence of a provincial agrarian party. Maharg had even entered the provincial Cabinet while retaining his position as president of the S.G.G.A.<sup>70</sup> The other incident was much more dramatic. It was the recall of Rice Sheppard from the Board of Directors because he campaigned against the U.F.A. candidate in Strathcona while a member of the executive. Sheppard denied that he was disloyal or had violated the constitution, but he did admit that during his election contest with D. W. Warner, he was the author of a pamphlet which stressed his membership in the U.F.A. and the fact that he was an officer of the association. When Wood denied that there was any distinction between the general work of the U.F.A. and its political activities, Sheppard accepted this ruling as a condemnation of his position. Tearing the director's badge from his coat, he stalked from the platform still proclaiming his loyalty to the organization.<sup>71</sup>

From the beginning the Progressives' influence in Parliament was seriously hampered by these divisions within their own ranks. Although Crerar declared that the new party would adopt a "wait and see" attitude towards the government's programme, events soon made it clear that some of his followers were more Liberal than Progressive in their political allegiance. In the session of 1922 the support of nine Ontario and British Columbia Progressives led to the passage of the Liberal budget although it had been severely criticized by Crerar and other Progressives because of its lack of tariff changes, in particular the failure to reduce the tariff on agricultural implements as promised.<sup>72</sup> On

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1922, p. 7.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, May 4, 1921, p. 19.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1922, p. 24.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, June 21, 1922; House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1922, vol. 3, pp. 2459-74.

the Wheat Board question, the same lack of internal unity was displayed. Crerar had been opposed to the re-establishment of the Wheat Board since 1920 because he regarded it as a "long step forward in the direction of the socialization of industry in this country."<sup>73</sup> Under pressure from the majority of the Progressive representatives, led by the Alberta contingent, he reluctantly agreed to support it in 1922. However, he tried unsuccessfully to have the question of the constitutionality of the proposed board referred to the Supreme Court of Canada.<sup>74</sup> When this failed, he accepted the legislation providing that it was not adopted as a permanent solution to the wheat marketing problem.

But it was the debate over the question of the political future of the farmers' movement which revealed the fundamental incompatibility between the positions of Wood and Crerar. The parliamentary session of 1922 had revealed considerable lack of harmony among the Progressive members about the exact aims of this new political party. Crerar had regarded the agrarian revolt primarily as a rebellion of the liberal members of the Liberal party against the domination of that organization by eastern protectionist elements, chiefly from Quebec, and he had been severely criticized by some members of the party because his policy failed to win for it the influence warranted by its members and the precarious political balance between the two old parties. In a speech at Toronto in July, 1922, he came out boldly for a union of the farmers' party with the reform wing of the Liberal party and against making the agrarian movement a class organization.<sup>75</sup> He told the Canadian Council of Agriculture that a permanent political body should be set up, controlled by a national executive.<sup>76</sup> Wood strongly opposed this attempt to transform the Progressive movement into a somewhat more liberal version of the Liberal party and he criticized the efforts to set up a party machine controlled by the Progressive M.P.'s as an instrument which would mean control from the top down, not from the bottom up. He accused some members of wishing

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, session 1920, vol. 5, p. 4120.

<sup>74</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, April 12, 1922, p. 4.

<sup>75</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, July 13, 1922.

<sup>76</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, July 31, 1922.

to enter into fusion with the Liberals and of disassociating themselves from the farmer organizations which had elected them.<sup>77</sup> Solutions to the farmers' economic and political problems must be found through the development of group co-operation and understanding based on the members' "particular economic interests." The political party was too inefficient an instrument for this work because, based on a temporary coalition of shifting interests, it lacked any fundamental common principles uniting its supporters.<sup>78</sup> Wood's indictment was supported by many within the Progressive movement who agreed with him that Crerar's plan was making the party merely the "dilapidated annex" of the Liberals. In Alberta the U.F.A. attacked the proposed national Progressive organization as a blow to democracy, and attributed it to a desire for office by Crerar and Drury. Moreover, if the new organization was set up, there was danger that the provincial association might lose control of their political branch and that the close supervision exercised by the U.F.A. locals over their chosen representatives would be ended.<sup>79</sup>

Because of the increasing criticism of his leadership by Wood and the supporters of group organization, Crerar announced his resignation at a meeting of Progressive members of Parliament in Winnipeg, in November, 1922. Ostensibly he resigned because of the need to devote his full time to the affairs of the United Grain Growers, but it was widely rumoured in the Western press that the real reason was divergence of opinion over party policy.<sup>80</sup> In his letter of resignation, he sharply criticized Wood's ideas as responsible for the loss of thousands of supporters to the Progressive cause. To Crerar, a member of Parliament was not a delegate of a constituency, and should be left free to use his individual judgment. He advocated the creation of a national organization and the setting up of a national treasury. He could no longer remain as leader and watch the Progressives' "descent into a purely class movement."<sup>81</sup> Wood replied tartly that the idea of group organization had been openly advocated during the

<sup>77</sup>H. W. Wood, "The Group vs. the Party," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 6, 1922, p. 17.

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*, May 13, 1922, pp. 4, 13.

<sup>79</sup>U.F.A., July 15, 1922, p. 3; *ibid.*, Aug. 15, 1922, p. 3.

<sup>80</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Nov. 17, 1922.

<sup>81</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Nov. 15, 1922, pp. 3-4.

last general election by the U.F.A. "If it would be a violation of his conscience at the present time to be associated with such a group, I cannot see how he reconciled his conscience a year ago."<sup>82</sup>

The departure of Crerar once more raised the question, bypassed at the Saskatoon conference, of the future course of the party. Accusations were made that there was a secret deal between Crerar and King for an amalgamation of the Progressive and Liberal parties. The attempt of the Crerar-Drury supporters to create a national party and to allow the federal members to choose their own leader and set up their own organization was defeated because the Alberta representatives, dependent for their election on the support of the U.F.A. organization and imbued with the group government philosophy of Wood, threatened to bolt the party if Crerar's views were accepted. As a result, a compromise resolution was adopted, referring the question of a national party organization to the constituency associations.<sup>83</sup> To succeed Crerar as leader, Robert Forke, of Brandon, was elected. He was a moderate supporter of "broadening out," but he was willing to leave control over the party in the hands of the provincial associations.<sup>84</sup> The *Manitoba Free Press* hailed the results of the conference as a victory for the "political party" advocates but, in reality, it was a drawn battle.<sup>85</sup> The formal unity of the Progressive party had been retained, and Forke, a Crerar supporter, named head, but actual control remained in the hands of the provincial political associations. Wood had not succeeded in forcing the farmer members outside of Alberta to accept his ideas, but he was confirmed in control of the political movement in that province. *The U.F.A.*, commenting editorially on the Winnipeg meeting, declared that the final outcome was satisfactory since each province retained control of its own political organization.<sup>86</sup>

During 1923 and 1924 the internal divisions within the agrarian movement became increasingly obvious. With the retirement of Crerar and the refusal of Wood to enter politics, the new party

<sup>82</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 10, 1922.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 13, 1922.

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1922.

<sup>85</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Nov. 13, 1922.

<sup>86</sup>*U.F.A.*, Nov. 15, 1922, p. 3.

was deprived of its ablest and most widely respected leaders. The provincial control over the representatives tended to split the Progressives into provincial blocs and prevented the development of any central unity. Forke, too, whom one commentator described as a "political nonentity," lacked the ability to reunite the scattered fragments of his party.<sup>87</sup> During the session of 1923 the break-up began when several Ontario Progressives joined the Liberal party. Others were only prevented from following their example by the refusal of Fielding, Gouin, and the protectionist group in the Liberals to make any tariff concessions.<sup>88</sup> The loss of several eastern by-elections in 1923 to the Conservatives and the retirement of Fielding and Gouin from the Cabinet led King to renew his efforts to secure a Liberal-Progressive alliance. Crerar, who still retained great influence in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, visited the Prime Minister at Ottawa, and the *Montreal Star* declared that he had promised that "enough high-principled Progressives would be loaned—or 'hired'—to the government to prevent its being turned out this session by an adverse vote on a major issue."<sup>89</sup>

As an indication of this new *rapprochement* between the Progressives and the Liberals, Robb, the new Minister of Finance, brought down a budget which included a general tariff reduction of about 5 per cent, removal of the sales tax on a large number of items, and the placing of all steel used in the manufacture of farm implements on the free list.<sup>90</sup> King declared that if the West would unite and "rally to the standard of Liberalism, it would be possible to secure a greater measure of support and a greater measure of success in securing the fulfilment of demands."<sup>91</sup> Most of the Progressive members welcomed this Liberal programme and supported it strongly. One Conservative member sourly remarked that the Liberal Cabinet was "a cabinet in custody" and Forke was a "Rasputin behind the throne."<sup>92</sup>

<sup>87</sup>*Maclean's Magazine*, July 1, 1923, p. 15.

<sup>88</sup>Fielding was minister of Finance and Gouin was minister of Justice and a former premier of Quebec.

<sup>89</sup>*Montreal Star*, Feb. 28, 1924, quoted in the *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1924-5, p. 200.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, 1924-5, p. 222.

<sup>91</sup>*Ibid.*, 1924-5, p. 208.

<sup>92</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1924, vol. 4, p. 2021.

The closer the relationship between the Progressives and the government grew, the more strained grew the relations between the Wood supporters and the rest of the farmer members. This coolness was accentuated by the strong stand taken by the U.F.A. on the question of political co-operation. The action of the Alberta M.P.'s in opposing the setting up of a national party had been endorsed by all the federal constituency associations.<sup>93</sup> Wood had also criticized the movement towards centralization as a blow to democracy and he had appealed to the farmers to stand firmly behind their association and its political representatives. In the House of Commons the majority of the U.F.A. members found themselves advocating economic and political reforms which were not supported by the other agrarian members. From the outset the Alberta delegation had played a leading role in connection with banking and currency reform, rural credit, responsibility of a member to his constituents, and in attempting to restrict the dominant influence of the Cabinet over the House of Commons.<sup>94</sup> Their efforts in this direction, however, received little encouragement from the other Progressive M.P.'s.

The last bonds uniting the supporters of group organization with the Progressive party were snapped during the session of 1924. On two of the most important issues affecting the West—the budget and the extension of the Bank Act—the advocates of group government were in a hopeless minority. The amendment of J. S. Woodsworth in favour of free trade in the “necessities of life” was supported by only fourteen Progressives, of whom seven were from Alberta. Forke opposed it on the grounds “that it was not in the best interests of the movement which we represent in this part of the Chamber.”<sup>95</sup> On the proposal to limit the extension of the Bank Act to one year, introduced by Spencer of Battle River, there was the same lack of support from many of the Progressive members.<sup>96</sup> This obvious difference in point of view led those who believed in a more independent Progressive

<sup>93</sup>U.F.A., Dec. 1, 1922, p. 3.

<sup>94</sup>For example, see the debate on William Irvine's motion to prevent the resignation of the government except on a direct vote of want of confidence, House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1923, vol. 1, pp. 208-15.

<sup>95</sup>*Ibid.*, session 1924, vol. 2, p. 1652.

<sup>96</sup>Of the forty-two members who voted for the Spencer amendment, ten were from Alberta, House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1924, vol. 5, p. 4340.

policy to withdraw formally from the agrarian parliamentary organization. This "Ginger Group," as it was called, was organized as an independent unit under the leadership of Robert Gardiner of Medicine Hat. By the end of the session, it included all the U.F.A. members except four—L. H. Jelliff, D. F. Kellner, Alfred Speakman, and W. T. Lucas. The "Ginger Group" declared that they were willing to co-operate with the other farmer representatives on matters pertaining to the welfare of their constituents, but they were not willing to sacrifice their loyalty to their local supporters to the discipline of the party caucus.<sup>97</sup>

Outside of Alberta, the formation of the "Ginger Group" provoked considerable criticism from other farmer leaders. The *Grain Growers' Guide* declared that some form of parliamentary organization was necessary and that the withdrawal of this group hindered rather than aided the farmers' cause.<sup>98</sup> Forke blamed the action on "personal sensibilities" and "unfounded suspicions." He urged them to return and pointed out that the best hope of securing any worthwhile reforms lay in maintaining the unity of action obtainable through organization.<sup>99</sup> Despite the pleas of the other Progressives and the admonitions of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, the "Ginger Group" refused to alter their independent course. By the close of 1924 it was apparent that the political unity of the agrarian revolt was ended. It had become a collection of sectional and provincial movements which had neither organization nor leadership outside of Alberta.

The difficulties of the farmer members of Parliament were increased as a result of growing dissensions over political action. The success of the Progressives in securing the re-establishment of the Crow's Nest Pass rates in 1923 and the Robb budget of 1924 with its lowered duties on agricultural implements, had removed two of the most pressing grievances of the farmers. The rise of the Wheat Pool movement had absorbed much of the farmers' energy and led to a corresponding decline in political activity. The farmers' commercial companies had never been enthusiastically in favour of the farmer in politics and now, Wood reported, they were using their powerful influence within the Canadian

<sup>97</sup>U.F.A., July 2, 1924, p. 12; *ibid.*, July 15, 1924, p. 4.

<sup>98</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 9, 1924, p. 5.

<sup>99</sup>U.F.A., July 2, 1924, p. 13.



Council of Agriculture to get that body to withdraw its support of agrarian political action.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, the quarrels between those who wanted a completely independent farmers' movement and those who favoured co-operation with the Liberals further undermined the position of the Progressive party. In March, 1923, the Canadian Council of Agriculture succumbed to the pressure of the farmer-owned grain companies and formally withdrew from politics. The direction of this work was placed in the hands of the provincial associations.<sup>101</sup> The Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, faced with a falling membership and the competition of a new non-political body, the Farmers' Union of Canada, divorced themselves from political action in 1924.<sup>102</sup> In Manitoba control of the Progressive party was handed over to a special committee completely independent of the farmers' organization.<sup>103</sup> As far as Alberta was concerned, however, Wood made it clear that the U.F.A. was "still in politics up to its neck." The action of the other provincial associations would have no effect on the determination of the farmers of Alberta to continue to finance and direct their own agrarian political movement.<sup>104</sup>

As the farmers' movement disintegrated, the control of the U.F.A. organization over the farmer members from Alberta tightened. Wood and the U.F.A. executive supported the formation of the "Ginger Group" on the ground that it was "for the good of the organization."<sup>105</sup> Wood remained staunchly opposed to any suggestion of amalgamation with the old political parties or the scrapping of the group organization developed in Alberta. Both the pro-and anti-"Ginger Group" supporters among the Alberta M.P.'s declared their loyalty to his principles of organization. The only argument was over the question of whether or not they should accept Forke's statement that all members could vote against the decision of the party caucus and that the matter of organization was one for each provincial association to decide for itself. A. Speakman, of Red Deer, believed that he could get more for his constituents by remaining a member of the Progressive party and

<sup>100</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 24, 1923, p. 18.

<sup>101</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, March 28, 1923.

<sup>102</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1924-5, p. 418.

<sup>103</sup>*Ibid.*, 1925-6, p. 457.

<sup>104</sup>U.F.A., May 15, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>105</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 17, 1924, p. 27.

using his influence to change the programme of the party. E. J. Garland of Bow River declared that this method had been tried and had failed, because the other Progressive members were manifestly unwilling to accept the validity of U.F.A. principles. Therefore, it was time for the supporters of group government to withdraw from the party and set up their own organization.<sup>106</sup> Because of the difference of opinion over the proper course of the U.F.A. members revealed by this debate, and because of the resolutions of various district associations, withdrawing from the party became one of the principle subjects discussed at the 1925 convention.

The debate was an important one, for it involved the question of whether the central association or the local constituency associations had the right to direct the actions of the U.F.A. federal representatives. If the latter view prevailed, then there was serious danger that the unity of the farmers' movement in Alberta would be destroyed and it would suffer the same fate as was rapidly overtaking the agrarian revolt as a whole. The members would become a collection of independent and impotent individuals, most of whom would probably be replaced by Conservative or Liberal representatives at the next general election. Wood recognized the danger, and during the course of his presidential address appealed for loyalty to the U.F.A. as an economic class organization and warned against "broadening out" the farmers' movement. "Are we going to turn back . . . to consult the ghosts of political failures for a miraculous panacea for social disorders?" he asked.<sup>107</sup> The resolution declaring that the Alberta members of Parliament were responsible to the U.F.A. and not to the constituency associations led to a prolonged and dramatic debate. The anti-gingerites, led by Kellner of Edmonton East, accepted a compromise resolution which stated that the U.F.A. must retain its "solidarity as a group," and all the members agreed to co-operate in "finding practical methods whereby they can further the aims and objects of the organization."<sup>108</sup> The announcement of this agreement was received with tremendous applause, and the *Manitoba Free Press* correspondent declared that "it was as dramatic a moment as

<sup>106</sup>U.F.A., Dec. 15, 1924, pp. 4, 12, 13.

<sup>107</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 12, 1925, p. 11.

<sup>108</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 28, 1925, pp. 22, 26.

the writer has seen in the course of many years' attendance at political gatherings."<sup>109</sup> The next day, however, the debate was resumed in connection with the interpretation of the previous day's declaration. Under the direction of Wood, the interpretative resolution of the advisory federal constituency association committee was examined, clause by clause. As finally adopted, it declared that every elected U.F.A. member would be known as a U.F.A. representative and would be responsible to his own constituency organization. In turn this association was responsible to the organization as a whole. All U.F.A. candidates had to agree to this definition.<sup>110</sup> This result represented a victory for Wood and the supporters of independent political action. It recognized the supremacy of the central organization over all phases of political action and declared that the farmer representatives from Alberta were elected as members of the U.F.A. and supporters of its principles of economic group organization. In Alberta, at least, the farmers' revolt remained under the control of the provincial farmer association.

The Declaration of Principles of 1925 confirmed the decision of the U.F.A. Convention of 1920 in regard to control of the political movement in the province. Wood had emerged triumphant from the struggle with Crerar and the supporters of political party organization, and the action of the "Ginger Group" in repudiating the leaders of the Progressive party had been upheld. The threat of political disintegration and of fusion with the Liberals had been checked, and the U.F.A. federal M.P.'s launched on a course of independent action which was to preserve farmer control of Alberta during the troubled days of 1925 and 1926.

<sup>109</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Jan. 23, 1925.

<sup>110</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 2, 1925, pp. 12-14.

## THE WHEAT MARKETING PROBLEM

FOR THE FARMERS of western Canada 1919 was "the year of decision" in an economic as well as a political sense. Were they to return to the old ways of individual, competitive selling on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange or were they going to follow along the new wartime path in the direction of national marketing under government supervision and regulation? During the war they had received unprecedentedly high prices for their wheat as a result of the dependence of western Europe on Canadian and American supplies. The open marketing of wheat had been suspended, and government purchasing commissions had been set up both in North America and in Europe to handle the marketing of grain. As a result of their work, wheat prices in Canada had jumped from \$1.12 in 1914 to \$2.24 in 1918.<sup>1</sup> The success of the Board of Grain Supervisors, of which Wood was a member, had led many farmers to look with favour on government marketing control.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, when, with the end of the war and the proposed resumption of open trading in wheat, there were rumours of a drastic fall in prices, there was an immediate demand for a continuance of government aid throughout the west.

The high prices of the war period had led to a considerable expansion in wheat acreage. Between 1914 and 1918 wheat acreage in western Canada had increased from 9,335,000 acres to 16,125,000 acres and by 1919 it had risen to 17,750,000 acres.<sup>3</sup> Much of this new cultivation was on marginal or sub-marginal

<sup>1</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 413.

<sup>2</sup>For a discussion of the work of the Board of Grain Supervisors see *supra*, chap. III, pp. 53-5.

<sup>3</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 413.

land whose low productivity per acre required a high price per bushel for successful farming. Moreover, agrarian costs continued high or actually increased in 1919 under the impact of the post-war inflation. Food and clothing prices were higher in 1919 than in 1918; agricultural wages had doubled during the war; railway rates, following the suspension of the Crow's Nest Pass agreement, shot up rapidly and continued to advance throughout 1919.<sup>4</sup> The action of the American government in setting up a United States Grain Corporation to buy American wheat at a minimum price of \$2.26 a bushel for No. 1 Hard Spring Wheat was a further impetus towards the establishment of a similar body in Canada.<sup>5</sup> One reason for the widespread Prairie support of the new Progressive party was the belief that, because of its agrarian character, it would pay more attention to farmers' problems and use its political strength to force the government to adopt a number of agrarian reforms including a guaranteed price for the 1919 wheat crop.

This movement was strengthened by the publication of a letter by Norman Lambert in the *Grain Growers' Guide* which predicted the end of European controls over wheat buying and a European wheat surplus. He asserted that many in Great Britain expected a price decline amounting to \$1.25 a bushel by September.<sup>6</sup> Because of this anticipated fall in prices the government was as reluctant to follow the American example and establish a minimum price as the western farmers were desirous that there should be some guarantee against financial disaster for the Prairie wheat grower. Letters in the farm journals and the western press indicated a strong fear that unless the government established a minimum price the farmers would be ruined. The supporters of price fixing felt that since the government had kept prices artificially low during the war they should aid the farmer in getting a higher price now.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand the government felt that to establish a fixed price on a falling market was to benefit one class at the expense of all Canadian consumers.<sup>8</sup> De-

<sup>4</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 323.

<sup>5</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Dec. 5, 1919.

<sup>6</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, March 13, 1919, p. 64.

<sup>7</sup>*Farmers' Advocate and Home Journal*, March 13, 1919, p. 464; *Manitoba Free Press*, March 7, 1919.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, March 7, 1919.

spite the protests of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, and the United Grain Growers, the government refused to alter its decision and on July 15 re-opened the Winnipeg Grain Exchange.<sup>9</sup> The unexpectedly rapid rise in wheat prices instead of the expected decline, combined with the continuance of government purchasing by European countries, led the Borden administration to reconsider its action and to adopt the suggestion of the Canadian Council of Agriculture for the establishment of a national wheat marketing agency.<sup>10</sup>

The Canadian Wheat Board was established on July 31, 1919. It was made up of representatives of the organized farmers, the grain trade, and the flour milling interests and was presided over by James Stewart, president of the Wheat Export Company. Its vice-president was F. W. Riddell, general manager of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. Wood was a member of the board. It was a marketing as well as a regulating and price-fixing body with power to dispose of all Canadian grain at fixed prices and to establish fixed spreads between the different grades. As it handled the entire crop and regulated the prices paid both by foreign and by domestic buyers, it had the authority to limit the profits of Canadian millers to prevent profiteering. In contrast with the American plan, the Board proposed to pay each producer a fixed amount when the grain was delivered and to distribute, by means of participation certificates, whatever profits remained at the close of its operations.<sup>11</sup>

In the controversy which had raged over the best method of marketing the 1919 crop, Wood had played an important and conspicuous role. Because of his experience as a member of the Board of Grain Supervisors and because of his strong belief in co-operative effort rather than government regulation, he had strongly opposed the fixed price demand. At the annual convention of the U.F.A. in 1919 he had been one of the strongest voices against a resolution favouring the establishing of a Canadian price equal to that in the United States. He stated that for

<sup>9</sup>S. W. Yates, *The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool* (Saskatoon, 1947), p. 22.

<sup>10</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 330; Yates, *Wheat Pool*, p. 22.

<sup>11</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1919, p. 331.

the farmers to ask for a guaranteed price on their wheat while denouncing protection was inconsistent with their anti-protectionist views. Largely as the result of Wood's influence the resolution was rejected and, instead, the U.F.A. adopted a resolution in support of government loans to enable farmers to hold their wheat until ready to sell.<sup>12</sup> Wood's position was denounced as a betrayal of the farmers and "playing into the hands of the grain exchange."<sup>13</sup> Despite this criticism Wood continued to oppose any attempt to place the U.F.A. beside the S.G.G.A. in support of a guaranteed price, for he was firmly convinced that the way to economic salvation, like political salvation, lay in co-operation and self-help rather than through government regulation. He was not opposed, however, to government aid when this assistance was directed towards enabling the farmers to find new markets for their agricultural surplus. He advocated government loans to foreign countries to assist them in buying Canadian wheat.<sup>14</sup> This proposal, which received scant consideration at that time, became an important part of Canadian agricultural policy in 1946-7 when the government was faced with a similar post-war wheat marketing problem. Wood also supported the Wheat Board because it was a way to promote economic co-operation among the farmers. His experience as a member of the Board of Grain Supervisors had convinced him of the considerable reduction in costs of marketing which could be made through the use of large-scale business techniques and which would result in a higher average price being obtained by the individual farmer.

Few farmers shared Wood's faith in the efficacy of the new method. The *Manitoba Free Press* called the plan "economically open to the gravest question; while politically it is midsummer madness." It pointed out that the rapid rise in wheat prices had inflamed the farmers with visions of wheat at \$2.40 or \$2.50 a bushel.<sup>15</sup> The farmers wanted the government to establish \$2.26, the minimum American price, as the initial payment, but Sir George Foster rejected this and instead proposed \$1.75 as the initial payment. This was equally unsatisfactory to the farmer

<sup>12</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 25, 1919.

<sup>13</sup>*Alberta Non-Partisan*, March 12, 1919, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup>*Calgary Herald*, April 24, 1919.

<sup>15</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Aug. 1, 1919.

members of the Wheat Board, and a compromise was reached making \$2.15 a bushel the initial price.<sup>16</sup> Opposition to this price was expressed by many farmers who felt that the initial price would also be the final price, too. Wood strongly opposed this view and warned the wheat growers against selling their participation certificates which he declared would eventually be worth at least \$2.30 a bushel.<sup>17</sup>

As prices continued to rise on the Minneapolis market, western dissatisfaction with the Wheat Board continued. There was general distrust of the Board's policies and widespread fear that the interests of the farmer were being sacrificed for the benefit of the grain companies, including the farmer-owned ones.<sup>18</sup> O. R. Gould (Assiniboia) declared in the House of Commons that there was little confidence in the value of participation certificates and that where it was geographically possible Canadian farmers were taking advantage of the higher American prices by hauling their wheat to American elevators.<sup>19</sup> At the 1920 U.F.A. convention, an attack was made on the Wheat Board for its failure to secure adequate prices for the farmers.<sup>20</sup> Wood declared that the higher prices prevailing at Minneapolis were the result of the absence of Canadian competition because of an American embargo on Canadian wheat. Once that embargo was lifted Canadian wheat would be sent there, and he promised that any benefits secured by the Board as a result of the higher American prices would be passed on to the farmers. Wood defended the work of James Stewart as president of the Wheat Board—particularly his action in keeping quiet about the actual price received for Canadian wheat because he was engaged in an international "poker game" where too much publicity might ruin the whole situation. After hearing Wood's explanation, the convention tabled the resolution criticizing the Wheat Board.<sup>21</sup>

A good deal of the criticism of the Board was caused by the secrecy of its operations and the fear that Canadian farmers would not receive as good a price as their American rivals. The announce-

<sup>16</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 20, 1919, p. 3; *ibid.*, Aug. 27, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>17</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Aug. 26, 1919.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1920.

<sup>19</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1920, vol. 1, p. 127.

<sup>20</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Jan. 28, 1920.

<sup>21</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 28, 1920, p. 18.



ment by the Board on May 5, 1920, of an interim payment of 40 cents a bushel removed much of the original distrust.<sup>22</sup> Wood's defence of the Wheat Board and his assertion that the farmers would receive considerable benefits from its operation were now justified. His prestige rose correspondingly. Part, at least, of the support later given to Wood and the wheat pool movement was due to the success of the Wheat Board in 1919.

The success of this method of wheat marketing led to demands for its renewal for the handling of the 1920 crop. The Canadian Council of Agriculture passed a resolution in favour of the continuance of the Wheat Board as long as European marketing conditions continued abnormal.<sup>23</sup> Wood campaigned actively throughout Alberta and Saskatchewan in favour of the continuance of the Board for at least one more year. Speaking at Wynyard, Saskatchewan, he declared that wheat would be kept up to \$2.50 a bushel if the Board was continued. "This spring there was very little opposition to the Board; only a tenth of the people were opposed to continuing wheat control under a Board; the big interests were the ones against the Board."<sup>24</sup> It was this speech which revived the movement for the Wheat Board in Saskatchewan and helped to range that province with Alberta in support of its continuance.<sup>25</sup> In Parliament Crerar introduced a resolution in favour of retaining the Board for one more year, but declared that he was opposed to this method as a permanent policy.<sup>26</sup> The district meetings of the U.F.A. resounded with demands for the continuance of the Wheat Board. The Bow River convention, for example, passed a resolution in favour of co-operative wheat marketing and declared their opposition "to being thrown into the hands of speculators again and being placed at their mercy."<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, when the government announced on July 16 that the Wheat Board was to be discontinued as of August 31 and the Grain Exchange to be re-opened, there was sharp criticism. Wood vigorously denounced the government and blamed it for the

<sup>22</sup>*Calgary Herald*, May 6, 1920.

<sup>23</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Jan. 5, 1920.

<sup>24</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1920, p. 106.

<sup>25</sup>Letter to Wood from C. A. Anderson, Summersby, Sask., May 8, 1923, in Wood Papers.

<sup>26</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1920, vol. 5, p. 4119.

<sup>27</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 4, 1920, p. 10.

serious economic plight of the wheat farmer. He stated that it was the inefficient selling methods of the open market and the manipulation of that market by foreign governments which was responsible for the fall in wheat prices, and he called on the government to step in and aid the farmer by re-establishing the Wheat Board.<sup>28</sup> Wood's arguments were challenged by Sir George Foster and S. F. Tolmie, Minister of Agriculture, both of whom denied that the Wheat Board would have kept prices up. The decline was due not to the restoration of the Grain Exchange, but to the presence of a surplus of European and American wheat which was competing with a greatly augmented Canadian crop—it was over-supply, not marketing methods, that was the villain of the piece.<sup>29</sup> Wood and the western farmers remained unconvinced, and as the price of wheat declined so did the popularity of the government. The farmers' determination to achieve reforms by direct political action was strengthened by the government's refusal to pay attention to their complaints and resolutions. To them it was just one more proof that the government was under the control of the "interests" and not the people.

The refusal of the administration to retain the Wheat Board forced the farmers to look for some alternative method of solving their marketing problems. In this search the U.F.A. led the way. Alberta farmers had not benefited greatly from the high wheat prices of 1918 and 1919 because of a serious crop failure in each of these years. As they saw the prices fall day by day in the autumn of 1920, they became increasingly alarmed about their future and correspondingly anxious to discover some alternative marketing method which would insure a maximum return on their crop. It was because of this that they became greatly interested in the co-operative agricultural marketing methods worked out on the Pacific coast by Aaron Sapiro and the California Fruit Growers' Association. In the spring of 1920 R. D. Colquette, of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, had written a number of articles on this American co-operative movement. Under this system the farmers were bound by a five-year contract to deliver all their agricultural production to a central pool which would market it and return all

<sup>28</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Oct. 8, 1920; *ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1920; *ibid.*, Oct. 12, 1920.

<sup>29</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Oct. 14, 1920; *Calgary Herald*, Oct. 21, 1920.

the profits to the producers. It had developed first among the California fruit growers but by 1920 had spread to the wheat growers of Washington, Idaho, and Oregon.<sup>30</sup> The success of this method led the executive of the U.F.A. on July 17 to ask the U.G.C. and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company to "consider the feasibility of organizing a co-operative pool for the purpose of delivering our farmers' wheat direct to European markets."<sup>31</sup>

As president of the U.F.A., Wood was an active supporter of the demand for the wheat pool. When the Canadian Council of Agriculture set up a three-man committee to investigate the practicability of the pool organization, Wood was one of the members.<sup>32</sup> Before the Medicine Hat district association he had blamed the rapid decline of wheat prices (over \$1 a bushel in ninety days) on the absence of any central selling agency. He attributed the ending of the Wheat Board to the opposition of the grain trade and declared that the only solution was either the re-establishment of the Board or the setting up of a farmer-controlled wheat pool.<sup>33</sup> Of the two solutions he favoured the second because it was in accord with his general support of co-operative methods in preference to compulsory ones. In his annual address before the 1921 U.F.A. convention, Wood emphasized that some solution must be found to the rapid fluctuation of prices of wheat sold on the open market. He believed that it was possible to correct this situation through the creation of a central selling agency modelled after the California contract pool experiment. The result was that at his suggestion a resolution in favour of establishing such an organization was carried with only six dissenting votes.<sup>34</sup>

Within the farmer movement as a whole, however, the wheat pool idea enjoyed only limited support despite Wood's endorsement of it as "the only system that promises success."<sup>35</sup> The lack of enthusiasm displayed in the other western provinces towards this method Wood attributed to the unco-operative attitude of the

<sup>30</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, April 28, 1920, p. 7; *ibid.*, May 5, 1920, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, July 28, 1920, p. 15.

<sup>32</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Oct. 22, 1920.

<sup>33</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 1, 1920, p. 14.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1921, pp. 8, 35.

<sup>35</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Feb. 3, 1921.

Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. This organization refused to appoint a member to the committee set up by the Canadian Council of Agriculture to bring about interprovincial co-operation in wheat marketing and the creation of a central selling agency.<sup>36</sup> This charge was hotly denied by George Langley, but, as the *Manitoba Free Press* pointed out, the names of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company representatives on this committee were not sent to the Canadian Council of Agriculture until the end of January, 1921, although they had been selected as early as December 21.<sup>37</sup> The executive of the U.G.C. was also opposed to the creation of a compulsory contract pool. Crerar favoured the establishment of a voluntary wheat pool which would market the grain through the facilities of the existing farmer-owned grain companies.<sup>38</sup> When the report of the special committee on agricultural marketing was presented to the Canadian Council of Agriculture, the opposition of these companies led to a number of important modifications in the original plan. The committee had advocated the inauguration of a sign-up campaign to secure a minimum of 50 per cent of the wheat acreage under contract and the establishment of a provisional board to make the necessary arrangements in regard to bank credit and elevator facilities. After some discussion it was decided to raise the minimum required acreage to 60 per cent and to change the provisional board into an organization committee which was to make arrangements with the farmer companies for the use of their facilities.<sup>39</sup>

It was evident that not all the agrarian leaders shared Wood's enthusiasm in regard to the urgency or the value of creating a wheat pool organization. At the annual convention of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association in 1921, Langley, Wood, and Dunning debated the merits of the voluntary pool as opposed to the compulsory, contract pool. The Saskatchewan leaders emphasized the difficulty of getting sufficient signatures to enable the pool to influence prices. It would only be effective if it included 60-75 per cent of all the farmers and they doubted if they

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1921.

<sup>37</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Feb. 11, 1921.

<sup>38</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Nov. 23, 1921, p. 12.

<sup>39</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Dec. 7-9, 1921.

could get that many signatures. Their solution was the revival of the Wheat Board with its control of all western wheat and of transportation facilities—a solution which would mean a guaranteed income to the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company through elevator and storage charges. Wood rejected this defeatist viewpoint because he believed that a pool could be established that year.<sup>40</sup> He repeated this statement before the Canadian Council of Agriculture and he told the delegates that the essential thing was to set up a central selling agency and to get the co-operative marketing movement under way. The question of securing facilities he was willing to leave until later.<sup>41</sup>

Despite Wood's vehement urging neither the Canadian Council of Agriculture nor the farmers as a whole were willing to launch themselves on the uncharted sea of co-operative marketing. The publication of the Stewart-Riddell Commission report confirmed many farm leaders in their opposition to the new method. This Commission, headed by James Stewart and F. W. Riddell, formerly of the Canadian Wheat Board, had been appointed by the Saskatchewan government to investigate the feasibility of creating a wheat pool. The commissioners' report rejected the contract pool because it would require 60-75 per cent of all the wheat acreage—a percentage the commissioners felt unattainable. They favoured the creation of a voluntary pool which would assist the farmer by establishing competitive standards for the grain trade. On the other hand there would be less profit to pool users than under the contract method because of the lower volume of grain handled.<sup>42</sup>

The difficulty of setting up pooling operations was increased by the absorption of the farmers and their leaders in the provincial and federal election campaigns of 1921. Meetings of the Canadian Council of Agriculture in July and September were forced to drop any discussion of the wheat marketing problem because of the absence of members who were engaged in election campaigns.<sup>43</sup> When the wheat pool committee finally reported in December, 1921, it merely repeated the points already enumerated by the

<sup>40</sup>Clipping from *Regina Leader*, Feb. 4, 1921 in Wood Papers; *Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 9, 1921, p. 22.

<sup>41</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Feb. 16, 1921.

<sup>42</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 18, 1921, p. 9.

<sup>43</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, July and September, 1921.

Stewart-Riddell report in regard to the difficulty of establishing a pool system which would include sufficient acreage to bring about any significant saving to the farmer.<sup>44</sup>

The pool movement was dead for the time being. By now the energies of the farmer associations were concentrated on the revival of the 1919 Wheat Board as the best way to solve the marketing problem. During the sittings of the ill-fated Hyndman Commission in Alberta, the U.F.A. had voiced a demand for the Board's re-establishment.<sup>45</sup> In Saskatchewan, E. A. Partridge, one of the early leaders of the farmers' movement there, had begun a campaign to get it re-established. Largely because of the support he had received from the farmers in the province, the S.G.G.A. officially endorsed it.<sup>46</sup> Wood remained non-committal, however. He preferred the wheat pool because of the co-operative character of its operations and its freedom from government interference. On the other hand he did not reject the Wheat Board as a temporary measure and as a preliminary step in the direction of the eventual creation of a co-operative farmer-controlled wheat pool. In his speech before the S.G.G.A. he had emphasized the advantage that the farmer received from the orderly marketing of his wheat and had declared that a Wheat Board would have saved the farmers \$50,000,000 to \$100,000,000 in 1920.<sup>47</sup>

Prices continued to decline in 1922. The average cash price for No. 1 Northern basis Fort William for October, 1922, was \$1.00 7/10 a bushel compared with \$1.15 5/10 in October, 1921.<sup>48</sup> The wheat growers were convinced that some remedy must be found immediately for their desperate economic position. Their great political victory in December, 1921, naturally led them to look for aid from their federal members of Parliament. The U.F.A. annual convention passed a resolution favouring the re-establishment of the Wheat Board, and the U.F.A. representatives at Ottawa were

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1921.

<sup>45</sup>*Calgary Herald*, June 10, 1921. The Hyndman Commission was a royal commission appointed by the Meighen government to investigate charges of false dealing in grain by the farmer-owned grain companies. The farmers asserted that its purpose was purely political and that its real objective was to discredit their commercial companies. The U.G.C. secured an injunction against its operations. *Grain Growers' Guide*, May-June, 1921; *Manitoba Free Press*, June 7, 1921.

<sup>46</sup>Yates, *Wheat Pool*, p. 37.

<sup>47</sup>Clipping from *Regina Leader*, Feb. 4, 1921, in Wood Papers.

<sup>48</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 413.

instructed to press for the necessary legislation.<sup>49</sup> When Parliament met there was an immediate demand by Progressive members, including Crerar, for the setting up of a new Wheat Board. Although Crerar was not a very enthusiastic supporter, he accepted it as a temporary solution and wanted its operation limited to a single year.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, during the debate on the Wheat Board bill he asserted that the reason for the high prices secured by the farmers in 1919 was not the efficiency of the Wheat Board's operation and methods but because of circumstances outside its control. He was referring to the threatened coal strike in Great Britain which led the British government to buy up all available grain to prevent a shortage in case of a transportation tie-up.<sup>51</sup> Crerar was too much a nineteenth-century laissez-faire economist and businessman to look with favour on any movement towards government regulation of economic activity. The reforms he wanted—lower tariffs, political democracy, and reduced government spending—were all those dear to Victorian liberalism.

Wood, however, became a strong supporter of the Wheat Board. He had abandoned any hope of achieving a contract wheat pool and now devoted his energies to leading the farmers in their crusade for the Wheat Board. Although he admitted that there was some danger of political interference with its operation, he felt that if "Jim" Stewart would become its head everything would work out satisfactorily.<sup>52</sup> Every attempt by the government to delay the passage of the Wheat Board bill or to weaken its powers brought from him a strong denunciation of its actions. He became convinced that it was deliberately sacrificing the interests of the prairie farmer and declared that "if the west ever had any hope of sympathy and fair treatment from the government it might as well disabuse its mind at once."<sup>53</sup> He blamed the low prices received by the wheat grower on the flooding of the market in the fall with the result that prices were lowest when the bulk of the farmers' wheat was marketed. He pointed out that in 1921 wheat prices had declined from \$1.64 in September to \$1.02 in November and between two-thirds and three-quarters of the wheat had been

<sup>49</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 20, 1922.

<sup>50</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1922, vol. 1, p. 54.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, session 1922, vol. 3, p. 2925.

<sup>52</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 20, 1922.

<sup>53</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, April 20, 1922.

disposed of when it was selling between \$1.20 and \$1.02 a bushel. This situation would be prevented by a Wheat Board which could regulate the flow of grain and through negotiation obtain a fairer price for the farmer. He maintained that the success of the 1919 Wheat Board was the result of its more efficient selling methods through the use of a central sales agency which reduced marketing costs and modified the effect of fluctuations in wheat prices. He claimed that the pre-war stability of agricultural prices was caused by the fact that wheat was selling at the feed value of coarse grains.<sup>54</sup> Because of his outspoken stand on the question, he was chosen to head the delegation from the Canadian Council of Agriculture sent to press for the re-establishment of the Board before the Agricultural Committee of the House of Commons.<sup>55</sup>

The battle for the Wheat Board was a bitter one. The Prime Minister, W. L. Mackenzie King, supported by the leading western Liberal cabinet ministers—Charles Stewart and W. R. Motherwell—at first refused to accede to the grain growers' demands and referred the whole question to the Agricultural Committee.<sup>56</sup> There, the government, with Crerar's support, sought to sidetrack the whole question by referring the constitutionality of the proposed bill to the Supreme Court of Canada, but the Progressive members of the Committee, aided by the Conservatives, rejected this suggestion. Instead the Committee recommended the re-establishment of a Wheat Board with the powers of the 1919 Board provided that two or more of the provinces concerned passed the necessary concurrent legislation.<sup>57</sup> In the House of Commons eastern Liberal representatives continued hostile. A. D. McLean of Halifax declared that the proposed Wheat Board would "hurt the very interests that its supporters are trying to serve. It is invoking a dangerous principle."<sup>58</sup> W. D. McMaster, a prominent free trade Liberal from Brome, Quebec, opposed it because of the compulsory aspect of the Board's powers which he asserted would

<sup>54</sup>H. W. Wood, "Why the Canadian Farmer needs a Wheat Board," *U.F.A.*, June 15, 1922, p. 4; H. W. Wood, "Can We Afford not to Establish a Wheat Board," *U.F.A.*, Dec. 15, 1922, p. 4; *ibid.*, Jan. 15, 1923, p. 4.

<sup>55</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Feb. 28, 1922.

<sup>56</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, March 22, 1922, p. 5.

<sup>57</sup>*U.F.A.*, June 1, 1922, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1922, vol. 4, p. 3176.



destroy freedom of agriculture in Canada.<sup>59</sup> In Alberta, the *Edmonton Bulletin* criticized the proposal strongly and denied the claims of Wood and other supporters that the 1919 Wheat Board had stabilized prices. It claimed that American prices in the same period were forty to fifty cents a bushel higher on the average and that the power of the provincial Wheat Board members over the farmers was comparable to that of Lenin in Russia. The whole community would be exploited for the benefit of a single group.<sup>60</sup> The organized grain trade was also against it, and the *Financial Times* denounced the measure as "arbitrary, unbusinesslike and autocratic."<sup>61</sup> Despite the strength of the opposition, the determination and political power of the farmer members forced the government to give way and to enact the necessary legislation. As the *Edmonton Bulletin* sadly remarked, editorially, "when the Progressives . . . unitedly and determinedly demand a Wheat Board . . . the Government is placed in a difficult position . . . if the demand is refused. The Government has so often yielded recently to less powerful pressure that the chances of its yielding in this case are at least a good bet."<sup>62</sup>

The act was severely criticized by many advocates of federal marketing legislation on the ground that the Board's powers were inadequate. Meighen described it as "a deformed, famished monstrosity."<sup>63</sup> It set up a Wheat Board for one year to handle the marketing of wheat and wheat products but not coarse grains; the sale of flour and other mill products was excluded from its control; and it had no authority over the movement of grain from the farms to the terminal elevators. To meet constitutional objections the act was "to become effective by proclamation as soon as two or more of the provinces have conferred upon this agency such powers possessed by the board of 1919 as come within provincial jurisdiction."<sup>64</sup> Wood attributed its defects to the opposition of eastern interests, but other farm leaders blamed the result on Crerar's

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 3189.

<sup>60</sup>Special supplement on the Wheat Board by the *Edmonton Journal*, Sept. 21, 1922.

<sup>61</sup>*U.F.A.*, May 1, 1922, p. 9.

<sup>62</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, May 20, 1922.

<sup>63</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1922, vol. 4, p. 3190.

<sup>64</sup>Quoted in *McPhail's Diary*, p. 37.

lukewarm support of the measure and the hostility of the grain trade. "I think this Wheat Board business is a fizzle all through and I think things are being worked to have it so. We know Crerar is not personally in favour of it."<sup>65</sup>

Both the Alberta and Saskatchewan provincial governments hastened to enact the legislation required to get the Board set up.<sup>66</sup> Unfortunately it proved easier to establish a Wheat Board than to find adequate personnel to operate it. Because of its defective powers both James Stewart and F. W. Riddell refused to head it. Wood also declined unless Stewart and Riddell would agree to become members of the board.<sup>67</sup> Dunning and Greenfield confessed their failure and stated that "men having the necessary ability and experience are unwilling to assume the great responsibility involved . . . because of the opposition in the grain trade in general. In this connection they repeatedly pointed out to us that the use of facilities controlled by the various branches of the trade was absolutely necessary."<sup>68</sup> Neither Wood nor the other agrarian leaders believed that it was possible for the Wheat Board to fulfil its task adequately under the existing legislation because the act gave it the appearance of authority without the reality of power. Any attempt to operate it, without the support of all the Prairie provincial governments, more general control over the marketing of both wheat and flour, and at least the neutrality of the grain trade, would only lead to disaster.

Despite the temporary abandonment of efforts to set up a Wheat Board, the search continued for a solution to the economic plight of the farmer. In December, 1922, Premier Dunning of Saskatchewan advanced the idea of an amalgamation of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company with the U.G.G. and the creation of a joint export company to handle all the farmers' grain marketing. This new organization would pay an initial price and issue participation certificates. However, before the profits were divided among the farmers, a 10 per cent dividend on the paid up capital of the companies would be paid and an additional

<sup>65</sup>Letter of A. J. McPhail to Mrs. V. McNaughton, Aug. 8, 1922, *McPhail's Diary*, p. 37.

<sup>66</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1922, pp. 793, 828.

<sup>67</sup>Yates, *Wheat Pool*, p. 45.

<sup>68</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, p. 35.

10 per cent would be set aside as a reserve. The provincial government would lend its financial support to get the project started.<sup>69</sup> This plan had the virtue of establishing a single agency to handle the marketing of the farmers' wheat while ensuring a guaranteed profit to the shareholders of the farmer grain companies. Crerar endorsed it heartily, but Wood was much more critical because he felt that control would be in the hands of the shareholders, not of the producers, and that the profits of the former were unduly high. Others criticized the scheme because the lack of assurance in regard to the volume of deliveries would make the negotiation of contracts difficult. The scheme was open to the same criticism as the purely voluntary pool—not enough grain handled, not enough profit for the individual farmer.<sup>70</sup> Because of the opposition of Wood and other agrarian leaders, the Canadian Council of Agriculture rejected the Dunning suggestion in favour of a renewed attempt to re-establish the Wheat Board.

As usual, Alberta took the lead. At the 1923 annual convention of the U.F.A. a strongly worded resolution was passed demanding the revival of the Federal Wheat Board. If that was unattainable, then a provincial one was to be set up because some method must be found to reduce the costs of marketing grain and to give a higher return to the farmer.<sup>71</sup> The *Edmonton Bulletin* criticized the resolution and declared that the demand for an all-Alberta board indicated "inside feeling that the tri-provincial board will not function."<sup>72</sup> Wood supported this demand as the first step towards establishing a "co-operative voluntary pooling system" and because he thought that if a provincial board were set up Alberta wheat could be shipped westward to Vancouver and thus "the stranglehold of the Winnipeg grain exchange would be broken."<sup>73</sup> He was concerned with finding some means of alleviating the serious economic position of the Alberta farmer. Although he personally favoured the introduction of the pool method of marketing grain, he felt that the farmers were not yet ready to support such a plan. Therefore, he lent his influence and pres-

<sup>69</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Dec. 20, 1922, p. 15.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 27, 1921, p. 14.

<sup>71</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1923, p. 12.

<sup>72</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, Jan. 17, 1923.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1923; *U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1923, p. 12.

tige to the movement for the revival of the Wheat Board. On the other hand he refused to accept the chairmanship of the proposed Board, partly because he felt he lacked the necessary ability and partly because he was doubtful of the success of the Board "under the present legislation."<sup>74</sup>

Beyond Alberta the contest between the supporters and foes of the Wheat Board continued. In Saskatchewan the farm leaders looked on the Board as the one device able to solve the farmers' marketing problem. In February the S.G.G.A. adopted a resolution in support of the Wheat Board as the permanent solution to this question.<sup>75</sup> In Manitoba, Crerar continued his campaign against it, and the resolution of the U.F.M. stated that the Board was to be just a temporary body.<sup>76</sup> Premier Bracken of Manitoba, when he sponsored the bill granting the necessary provincial authority to the Canadian Wheat Board, made it clear that it was to be only for a limited time. This bill, introduced, ominously enough, on Friday the thirteenth, ran into unexpectedly strong resistance. Because of the united opposition of the Winnipeg members and a minority of the rural representatives it was defeated 24-21.<sup>77</sup> Wood attributed this result to the hostility of the grain trade interests of the city of Winnipeg and to the selfishness of some farmers anxious to take advantage of the fact that their grain ripened earlier than elsewhere on the Prairies and thus reached the market a little sooner.<sup>78</sup>

The rejection of the Wheat Board bill by Manitoba marked the end of the movement on the Prairies in favour of compulsory marketing legislation. The lack of support from Manitoba and the refusal of the federal government to strengthen the Wheat Board Act of 1922 made impossible the setting up of a national marketing organization or finding adequate personnel to run it. Dunning and Greenfield offered to lend their government's financial assistance to a voluntary pool to be started by the United Grain Growers, but a sharp decline in wheat prices from \$1.24 to \$1.04 ended this scheme. The two premiers were forced to announce that they had "found it impossible to secure a board combining all necessary

<sup>74</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, p. 37.

<sup>75</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 7, 1923, p. 5.

<sup>76</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1923, p. 678.

<sup>77</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, April 25, 1923, p. 5; *ibid.*, May 2, 1923, p. 5.

<sup>78</sup>*U.F.A.*, May 1, 1923, p. 1.

elements of experience, ability and public confidence.”<sup>79</sup> The long struggle to restore the Wheat Board of 1919 through joint federal-provincial action had ended in failure.

This movement had not been entirely in vain, however. The discussion over wheat marketing, the search for some solution and the various answers proposed, had all helped to acquaint the farmer with the problem and taught him the necessity of some form of co-operative action if a successful result was to be achieved. The Wheat Board and the fight over its re-establishment were the necessary preliminaries to the wheat pool movement—the greatest co-operative achievement of the Canadian farmers in the twenties. In the Wheat Board struggle Wood had taken an important and conspicuous part. He had been a member of the Canadian Wheat Board and one of its most outspoken defenders. While he had made it clear that his personal inclination was in the direction of co-operative action, he was more than willing to seek government support when it was wanted by the farmer. He recognized that in 1920 and 1921 the farmer was not yet ready to give up his hope of a national marketing agency and follow the co-operative, contract methods of the American wheat pools. Throughout these critical years Wood’s task was that of a leader and guide. He always sought to advance the desires of his supporters, while at the same time he emphasized that the only lasting solution to their economic problems lay in co-operation among themselves, not in government legislation.

The failure of the Wheat Board agitation was instructive, too, for the light it threw on the deep divisions within the agrarian movement. The farmer-owned grain companies and their spokesmen, Langley, Musselman, Crerar, and Dunning were as much concerned with protecting the interests and profits of their shareholders as they were in advancing the economic welfare of the farmers in general. They were willing to co-operate in setting up a national marketing agency on a voluntary basis or even to turn over the use of their facilities to a Federal Wheat Board, but they were opposed to interprovincial co-operation or the setting up of a contract wheat pool outside their control. The jealousy between the U.G.G. and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company was another reason for the lack of unanimity displayed by western

<sup>79</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers’ Co-operation*, pp. 208-9.

agrarian leaders. The Saskatchewan Company was primarily a wheat handling company and was a strong supporter of the Wheat Board because it meant assured profit for their shareholders through elevator charges. The U.G.G. was also engaged in general business activities for the benefit of their shareholders and its directors, notably Crerar, were opposed to government regulation on principle and favoured reforms such as lower tariffs and freight rates, which would reduce business costs.

Economically, as well as politically, the 1919-22 era is a significant one in the history of Western Canada. The rapid fluctuation of prices between the high prices of the war years and the low prices of 1920-1 convinced the majority of western farmers that the old individualistic marketing methods were obsolete. The success of the Canadian Wheat Board in applying to grain marketing the same large-scale operating methods used by "big business" in other fields led to a demand for its continuance. Prairie wheat farming, with its high degree of mechanization, its concentration on one staple crop, its large farms, and its huge volume of production was ideally suited to the use of the techniques of American business enterprise.

Wood was the spokesman of those who believed in the necessity for a complete reconstruction of existing marketing machinery. He wanted the farmers as a group or under a government-appointed Wheat Board to develop a selling system based on a central selling agency, orderly marketing, and the distribution of profits through participation certificates. He visualized these operations being carried on through co-operating provincial associations under the control of the individual farmers. Through organization and co-operation they could solve their economic as well as their political problems. During this confused and difficult period Wood remained loyal to his philosophy of agrarian group action. Under his leadership the farmers' movement in Alberta had a unity of purpose which was lacking in other provinces. He succeeded in retaining the loyalty of the farmers, and when it was clear that the Wheat Board was unattainable they followed him, as a body, into the wheat pool campaign. Wood's influence among the farmers, therefore, was actually strengthened rather than weakened by the struggle over the Wheat Board.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WHEAT POOL

THE COLLAPSE of the Wheat Board movement did not end the farmers' search for some solution to their pressing marketing problems. In all three Prairie Provinces agrarian leaders and their followers were searching for some way to improve the economic position of the farmer. The U.G.G., at Crerar's insistence, suggested to a conference of western agricultural leaders at Winnipeg on June 12-13, 1923, that an interprovincial, voluntary pool should be set up. The two farmer-owned companies should finance it and should place their elevator facilities and marketing organization at its disposal on the same terms as that of the arrangements with the Wheat Board in 1919-20. The organization of this pool, however, should be the work of the provincial farmer associations so that if it failed the farmer companies would not be affected.<sup>1</sup> Like so many other plans this one was wrecked by provincial rivalry and jealousy. The S.G.G.A. and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company refused to consider the Crerar proposal. Instead their representatives once more raised the question of a possible revival of the Wheat Board. The directors of these two organizations were very much opposed to interprovincial action. They wanted the honour and prestige of successfully establishing a provincial pool because it would preserve the position of the elevator company and also head off the threat to the provincial association of the new organization—the Farmers' Union of Canada.<sup>2</sup> This latter body sought to organize the farmers on an economic class basis and it favoured economic action rather than

<sup>1</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 1, 1923, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from A. J. McPhail to Mrs. V. McNaughton, July 7, 1923, *McPhail's Diary*, pp. 43-4.

political action as the way to improve conditions for farmers. Already at its annual convention in Saskatoon it had come out for the contract wheat pool as the only method which would solve the farmers' marketing problem. Its leaders, L. C. Brouillette and J. H. Haslam, were strong pool supporters and were already negotiating with Aaron Sapiro, the American pool expert, for him to come to Saskatchewan and explain his methods.<sup>3</sup> However, because of the conflicting views as to the best course to follow little was actually accomplished. By the end of August there was still no acceptable alternative developed to marketing the wheat through the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. Three years of debate and falling agricultural prices had failed to produce any solution agreeable to all the provincial agrarian organizations.

In sharp contrast to this picture of futility was the record of the Alberta farmers' movement. The long years of experience and education in co-operation under the leadership of Wood enabled the farmers to establish the first contract wheat pool in Canada. Under his guidance, supplemented by the vivid wheat pool sermons of Aaron Sapiro, this experiment in economic co-operation was successfully launched. Wood was its first president and its most outspoken and active supporter. He had been an ardent champion of the pool movement since the inauguration of this method of wheat marketing in the United States in 1919-20 and he had been a member of the committee of the Canadian Council of Agriculture which investigated American marketing techniques in 1920. He had concurred in the committee's recommendation that a contract wheat pool to market all prairie grain should be established in Canada.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the height of the Wheat Board debate he had never lost his interest in pooling. He emphasized that the Wheat Board was a temporary, not a permanent, solution to the western wheat marketing problem. A permanent one was only possible through co-operative effort.<sup>5</sup>

Wood watched closely the efforts of Crerar and the U.G.G. to develop an interprovincial pool organization. When the attempt failed he became convinced that provincial action was the only

<sup>3</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 28, 1923, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Canadian Council of Agriculture, *Minutes*, Dec. 8, 1920.

<sup>5</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Feb. 3, 1921.



way by which the economic status of the Alberta farmers could be raised. That their economic condition was serious, was reflected in the sharply declining membership of the U.F.A.<sup>6</sup> Wood attributed this to the farmers inability to pay even the modest fees of that body and not to any growing indifference to the principles of the organization.<sup>7</sup> The announcement of the failure of the Wheat Board struggle was the signal for him to open a drive in favour of the establishment of a wheat pool. At his suggestion, *The U.F.A.* printed Sapiro's speech at Minneapolis detailing the history of the rise and decline of the Burley tobacco growers' pool of Kentucky.<sup>8</sup> He also sought to enlist the support of the provincial government and met with Greenfield, Brownlee, Reid, and Hoadley of the provincial Cabinet on June 28, 1923. At this conference the decision was reached to renew efforts abandoned in 1921 to establish a contract pool. Wood stated that there was a strong sentiment in favour of this method throughout the Prairies. Alberta, however, was prepared to go ahead, with or without outside aid, and set up their own wheat pool modelled on those already established in the United States.<sup>9</sup> In an article in *The U.F.A.* Wood amplified this newspaper account and declared that the failure of the farmers to get their Wheat Board made it necessary for them to set up some alternative organization to market their wheat. The logical instruments for creating such a body were the farmer-owned grain companies, but since they seemed unwilling or unable it was up to the farmers, themselves. They must organize provincial pools which would market their wheat through a central selling agency.<sup>10</sup> The advantage of this system was that it would be within the general framework of Canadian experience since it would combine provincial control and organization with a single inter-provincial directing body.

At a meeting of the U.F.A. directors, held during the first week in July, it was decided to postpone the drive for pool contract signatures until 1924. They did not believe that there

<sup>6</sup>The secretary reported that membership in the U.F.A. had fallen to 18,829 and that there was a deficit of \$5,000 on the year's operation. *U.F.A.* Feb. 1, 1923, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1923, p. 12.

<sup>8</sup>Interview with W. Norman Smith, July 16, 1948.

<sup>9</sup>*Albertan*, June 29, 1923; *Edmonton Bulletin*, June 29, 1923.

<sup>10</sup>*U.F.A.*, July 3, 1923, p. 1.

was sufficient time to get the system operating in 1923 and preferred to wait until 1924 rather than run the risk of failure through premature action. The board also rejected the offer of the *Calgary Herald* to finance a visit of Aaron Sapiro to the province to explain his ideas on pooling because it had already made arrangements with the provincial government to invite him to come later during the 1924 sign-up campaign.<sup>11</sup> On July 23 at a meeting at Regina all the leaders of the western agrarian movement decided to follow the example of Alberta and postpone any effort in regard to the contract pool until 1924. In 1923, crop action was to be limited to the formation of a voluntary pool. Wood endorsed the Regina decision as sound. He was not opposed to the organization of voluntary district pools, but he believed that any interprovincial agency was impossible as far as the 1923 crop was concerned.<sup>12</sup>

This decision did not pass without sharp criticism by pool supporters in southern Alberta. This part of the province had been suffering severely from drought and looked on the immediate establishment of a pool as an economic necessity. U.F.A. leaders in this region disputed Wood's assertion that it was impossible to establish a contract pool in time to market the 1923 crop. At the McLeod district convention a resolution was passed advocating a wheat pool for this year's crop, and W.J. Jackman stated that an inter-provincial pool could be organized now. The *Calgary Herald* and the *Edmonton Journal* ignored the decision of the agrarian leaders and invited Aaron Sapiro to come to Alberta early in August. The *Herald* strongly criticized the provincial farm leaders, and Wood in particular, for their lack of initiative on the pool question. It blamed them for the public confusion over the status of the wheat pool movement and called on the farmers to give up "the narrow economic-political group theory of Wood."<sup>13</sup> Despite this attack Wood maintained his belief that it was impossible to organize an interprovincial pool in 1923 and reiterated his support of a provincial wheat pool as the only practical objective.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 24, 1923; *ibid.*, July 26, 1923.

<sup>13</sup>For discussion of the relationship between the leaders of the U.F.A. and the farmers with the Wheat Pool and Aaron Sapiro see the *Calgary Herald*, July 19-July 27, 1923.

He denounced the action of the *Herald* in bringing Sapiro as an attempt to alienate the farmers from their leaders.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand he made it clear that he was willing to co-operate with the latter in regard to organizing a provincial wheat pool.<sup>15</sup>

Sapiro brought to the movement an enthusiasm and oratorical ability which had already been employed successfully in the hard winter wheat states of the American northwest. Under his inspirational drive the wheat growers of Washington and Idaho had adopted his five-year pool contract with its penalty clause for non-fulfilment of delivery of the wheat. In December, 1919, Sapiro had addressed the representatives of the grain growers of the two states at their annual convention, and at his suggestion a committee had been appointed to confer with him on pooling methods. After an all-night conference the committee accepted his suggestions and the next day they were officially endorsed by the delegates.<sup>16</sup> The first contract wheat pool was established.

Sapiro's ideas were already well known among the farmers of western Canada before he arrived in August, 1923. The wheat pool committee set up in 1920 by the Canadian Council of Agriculture had conferred with him during their visit to the United States to study American marketing methods and had based their recommendations largely on his advice. As a member of this committee Wood was familiar with Sapiro's abilities and in April, 1923, at the outset of the Wheat Pool drive, had advocated that he be invited to Alberta.<sup>17</sup> Wood realized that Sapiro possessed the emotional fervour needed to turn the pool movement into an agrarian crusade for he was an orator of exceptional power with the ability to impart to economic developments moral earnestness and religious conviction.

Sapiro realized that the success of the Wheat Pool campaign depended on bringing together all elements in the province—business as well as agriculture—U.F.A. farmer and non-U.F.A. farmer. His first step was to call a meeting at the Palliser Hotel in Calgary of representative figures of all walks of industry, commerce, and agriculture in the province. Wood acted as chair-

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, July 26, 1923; *ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1923.

<sup>15</sup>U.F.A., Aug. 1, 1923, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup>J. G. Knapp, *The Hard Winter Wheat Pools* (Chicago, 1933), pp. 19-20.

<sup>17</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, April 13, 1923.

man and his calm moderation prevented the break-up of the conference on more than one occasion. Sapiro proposed that a drive should be started with the objective of signing up 50 per cent of the province's wheat acreage. This would give the pool a sufficient wheat supply to prevent dumping and to enable it to follow a more business-like course. To get this acreage he wanted a committee set up consisting of seven businessmen and ten farmers, five from the U.F.A. and five representing non-U.F.A. farmers. A sharp argument was precipitated when the claim was made that there were no farmers with sufficient ability to serve on this committee outside of the U.F.A. At that point Wood intervened and prevented further discussion by adjourning the meeting.<sup>18</sup> Under the spell of Sapiro's personality, both the farmer organization and the grain trade united in support of the pool. On August 4, John I. McFarland, head of the Alberta Pacific Grain Company, announced he was backing the pool.<sup>19</sup> The *Calgary Herald* and the *Edmonton Journal* enthusiastically endorsed the movement. On August 16, the organization of the provisional wheat pool Board of Directors under the chairmanship of Wood was completed, and plans were announced for a province-wide campaign for signatures to the contract. The canvass was to be based on provincial constituency boundaries, and the local M.L.A., or someone appointed by the central pool executive, was to be in charge of each district. There was to be a \$3 fee for membership to help defray the costs of organization.<sup>20</sup>

The contract followed the ideas of Sapiro and the experience of the American pools. It was for a five-year period and handed complete control over the disposal of the farmer's wheat crop to the Pool Association. A penalty of 25c. a bushel was to be levied if the farmer did not deliver all his wheat, except seed wheat for his personal use, to the pool. When the wheat was delivered the Association was to make an advance to the grower, and further payments were to be made as the crop was marketed. Deductions to cover handling charges and marketing costs were authorized. One per cent was to be set aside as a commercial reserve and there was to be a special levy of two cents a bushel to create an elevator reserve. It was to come into effect September ,

<sup>18</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Aug. 9, 1923.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 4, 1923.

<sup>20</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 22, 1923, p. 3.

5, 1923, providing 50 per cent of the 1922 wheat acreage was then under contract. If not, the members had two weeks in which to withdraw. At the end of that period the Association could put the agreement into effect for those members who remained, if it desired to do so.<sup>21</sup>

The campaign for signatures was a strenuous one. At the outset the central committee was nearly disrupted and the drive halted because of the unexpected opposition of J. I. McFarland. He was opposed to beginning the drive for signatures before arrangements were completed with the elevator companies for the handling of pool grain. So bitter was the argument that two of the non-U.F.A. farmer members resigned and there was talk of abandoning the whole idea.<sup>22</sup> At this moment Wood intervened. He urged that the campaign should get under way at once regardless of other considerations, and his course was endorsed by Sapiro in a telegram from Saskatchewan.<sup>23</sup> As a result the decision was taken to ignore McFarland's criticism and to launch the sign-up campaign immediately.

Wood was the real leader of this first and most important drive. Sapiro's ability lay in the realm of propaganda; Wood's in organization. The former could create a favourable atmosphere for the reception of the pool marketing method, but it took the latter to turn this enthusiasm into different accomplishments. It was the U.F.A. organization, which he had largely created, that was the backbone of this campaign. Wood travelled widely throughout the province addressing farmer groups and expounding his philosophy of co-operation. He emphasized that "it was up to the farmer."<sup>24</sup> The U.F.A. provincial government also assisted the campaign by a special grant of \$5,000 to cover the cost of organization and Brownlee, the provincial attorney-general, was one of the drafters of the first pool contract.<sup>25</sup> It was this co-operation by businessmen, farmers, and the government, under the leadership of Wood and the U.F.A., which brought greater success to the pool effort in Alberta than to those of Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

<sup>21</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, pp. 429-34.

<sup>22</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 22, 1923, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Aug. 23, 1923.

<sup>24</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 22, 1923, p. 3.

<sup>25</sup>J. T. Hull, "The Story of the Wheat Pool," *ibid.*, Oct. 1, 1924, p. 8.

At the close of the sign-up campaign in Alberta 27,000 contracts had been received representing 2,600,000 acres or 45 per cent of the total wheat acreage in the province; this was only 5 per cent short of the target of 2,880,000 acres originally set up.<sup>26</sup> In Saskatchewan Sapiro's visit had resulted in the dropping of the voluntary pool idea advocated by the S.G.G.A. and the concentration of propaganda and effort behind the contract pool sponsored by the Farmers' Union of Canada. However, Saskatchewan had no Wood and no U.F.A. and the bitter rivalries between the various farm bodies continued just below the surface. Only 4,500,000 acres or 37 per cent of the provincial total were brought under contract, and Saskatchewan followed the example of Manitoba and abandoned any attempt to set up a pool to handle the 1923 crop.<sup>27</sup> The Alberta pool, however, decided to carry on because of the unprecedented volume of wheat in the province and the farmers' strong support of the new method. During the two weeks optional withdrawal period less than 5 per cent of them withdrew and this loss was more than made up by new signatures.<sup>28</sup>

The boldness of this decision can be appreciated when it is realized that the pool had not yet made arrangements with the banks for the money to meet their initial payments to the growers. It had no contracts with the elevator companies for the handling of pool wheat, nor had it any sales organization to market the grain after it had been received. Once the die was cast the trustees, headed by Wood, moved swiftly and efficiently to complete the necessary arrangements. They were aided in their efforts by the sympathetic stand of the provincial government and the U.G.G. as well as the co-operation of the banks and the Alberta Pacific Elevator Company of John I. McFarland, who had recovered from his earlier pique. The reputation for honesty and integrity of Wood and his colleagues on the wheat pool board—O. L. McPherson, R. N. Mangles, B. S. Plumer, L. Hutchinson, C. Jensen, and W. J. Jackman—was another important factor. The spirit of loyalty and of working together which the U.F.A. organization had developed among Alberta farmers was an intangible but nonetheless valuable asset, whereas internal conflicts between

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1923, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 19, 1923, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 217.

rival farmer organizations hampered and weakened the pool movement in the other Prairie Provinces.

The U.G.G. assistance was particularly useful in the creation of the necessary sales organization. They released C. M. Elliott, their provincial manager in Alberta, and D. L. Smith, their export manager, to be pool manager and sales manager respectively. They also lent the pool \$10,000 with which to purchase a seat on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange and to cover general expenses.<sup>29</sup> The banks agreed to advance the pool \$15,000,000 at 6½ per cent interest to enable it to make an initial payment of 75 cents a bushel No. 1 Northern, basis Fort William. The only stipulation was that there must be a margin of 15 per cent between the initial price and the current price. At Wood's request the provincial government agreed to guarantee the banks against loss up to \$250,000 in case of a fall in the current price below the 15 per cent margin.<sup>30</sup>

The only difficulty the pool encountered was in connection with securing sufficient elevator facilities. Both the U.G.G. and the Alberta Pacific Elevator Company, controlling 40 per cent of the total elevator capacity in the province quickly agreed to handle pool wheat for 2¼ cents a bushel. This was the same rate that they had charged the Canadian Wheat Board of 1919-20.<sup>31</sup> Other country elevator companies, however, refused to sign on the grounds that the contract offered them was one cent a bushel less than that offered to those who had signed already. Wood denied this and declared that they absolutely refused to handle pool wheat.<sup>32</sup> In an article in *The U.F.A.* he stated flatly that the farmers would not let the elevator interests hold up the work of the pool and when non-pool elevators would not handle pool wheat the farmers were to take advantage of the loading platform provision of the Canada Grain Act.<sup>33</sup> The enthusiastic support that this idea received from the Alberta farmers and their loyalty to their contracts surprised the elevator operators. The volume of grain under pool control was so large that few country elevators

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>30</sup>J. T. Hull, "Story of the Wheat Pool," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 1, 1924, p. 16.

<sup>31</sup>Hull, *op. cit.*, Oct. 1, 1924, p. 16.

<sup>32</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Nov. 17, 1923.

<sup>33</sup>*U.F.A.* Nov. 15, 1923, p. 1.

could stand out and by the end of November nearly all of them were handling pool and non-pool grain on an equal basis.

The Alberta Wheat Pool officially began operations on October 29, 1923, and when it concluded its first year of operation on July 15, 1924, it was able to report a successful beginning. There were 29,440 members in the pool, and it had marketed 34,000,000 bushels which was 26 per cent of the total 1923 Alberta wheat crop and 40 per cent of that portion of the crop handled after the pool was set up. After deducting a fraction of one cent as a commercial reserve and to cover administrative expenses, the pool farmers received in cash a total of \$1.01 a bushel No. 1 Northern, basis Fort William. This price represented a substantial premium to the pool members since the average Fort William price during October-December, 1923, was 92-98 cents a bushel and country elevator prices in the same period were 70%-76% cents a bushel at 26 cents transportation rate points. Pool prices were 85 cents a bushel on the average at the same points.<sup>34</sup>

The successful introduction of the pool method led to efforts by the organized grain trade to discredit the movement as one based on "a strong appeal to prejudice of the producer" and the work of "alien demagogues." The support of the pool by the *Calgary Herald* and the *Edmonton Journal* was denounced, and the newspapers were charged with "undermining those principles of right and justice which are the very foundation stones of the structure of British democracy."<sup>35</sup> The *Edmonton Bulletin* never missed an opportunity to criticize the pool. It emphasized that the contract destroyed any freedom of action on the part of the farmer and placed him at the mercy of the "pool organization."<sup>36</sup> It was to combat this propaganda that Wood appealed to the farmers to organize locals where a U.F.A. one did not exist to solve local problems and to ensure that all farmers lived up to the terms of their contracts. He stressed the need for systematic co-operation as the only way to guarantee the success of the new method.<sup>37</sup> At the U.F.A. annual convention of 1924 he reported that the pool was successful so far in bringing economic relief

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 15, 1924, pp. 4, 6, 20.

<sup>35</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1923, p. 685.

<sup>36</sup>Based on a number of editorials and news stories throughout the year in the *Edmonton Bulletin*, 1923.

<sup>37</sup>U.F.A., Dec. 1, 1923, p. 4.



to the farmers. Previously, the farmers had been too content to follow academic solutions, but in the pool they had "the greatest practical enterprise yet inaugurated."<sup>38</sup>

Wood's role in establishing the wheat pool not only strengthened his influence in Alberta but made him one of the outstanding figures in the whole Canadian pool movement. When Saskatchewan and Manitoba renewed their campaign in 1924 to create a provincial pool organization Wood was one of the most active campaigners. In February and March he addressed a number of meetings in rural Saskatchewan and Manitoba in aid of the wheat pool idea. Everywhere he went he was received with enthusiasm. In Manitoba the speeding up of the sign-up campaign was attributed to the impression that he had made in the rural districts. In Saskatchewan one of his major addresses was given before the convention of Rural Municipalities. In this speech he appealed for support of the wheat pool as a great advance in co-operative marketing because it was based on the fundamental principles of group co-operation and would lead to more efficient salesmanship in the disposal of farm products. He emphasized how much could be saved through marketing wheat gradually. He claimed that the wheat pool would establish the "right relationship of prices" between the farmer and the consumer. He concluded with references to the successful operation by the American cotton farmers of a cotton pool in which his brother was a member.<sup>39</sup>

The campaign was successful but only after a severe struggle with entrenched grain handling interests. The situation was complicated because of the unenthusiastic attitude of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and its officials towards the new movement. At the annual meeting of the S.G.G.A. a sharp conflict in views between Pool and Elevator supporters was climaxed by the contest for president which saw George Edwards elected over J. A. Maharg, a Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator stalwart, by 264 to 198.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, the newly formed Farmers' Union was making rapid strides as the pro-pool organization under its able and energetic provincial organizer, L. C. Brouillette. Like Wood, he had been born in the United States but achieved his

<sup>38</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 23, 1924, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup>Saskatoon, *The Progressive*, March 13, 1924.

<sup>40</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, p. 53; *Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 30, 1924, p. 21.

greatest measure of success as a leader in the western Canada agrarian movement. It was Brouillette who took the lead in bringing Sapiro once more to Saskatchewan where the latter once more evoked great enthusiasm for the pool with his ability as a phrase-maker and public speaker. The principle newspapers in the province, alarmed at the possible loss of income from their printing and bookbinding services for the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, strongly opposed Sapiro and the Wheat Pool campaign.<sup>41</sup> Despite attacks on Sapiro's honesty, for which the *Regina Leader* was later forced to apologize publicly, the enthusiasm of the farmers for this new marketing method mounted throughout the spring of 1924. Supplementing the economic evangelism of Sapiro were the sober, practical speeches of Wood in which he declared that the pool meant greater marketing efficiency, greater farm income, and closer relation between the prices of what the farmer buys and of what he sells. When the first sign-up campaign ended on June 26, 1924, 46,000 farmers representing 6,400,000 acres had signed pool contracts.<sup>42</sup>

In Manitoba the opposition of the organized grain trade and the selfishness of individual farmers were the chief stumbling blocks. The objective of 1,000,000 acres proved impossible to attain as only 711,000 acres were under contract by May 22. Despite this, Manitoba decided to follow the example of Alberta and Saskatchewan and set up a provincial pool.<sup>43</sup>

The establishment of the provincial pools was followed at once by negotiations to create one selling agency to handle all the pools' wheat. Ever since the abortive 1920-21 attempt, Wood had been a leading advocate of provincial control combined with interprovincial co-operation. He had regarded the Alberta pool merely as a part of a larger Prairie one and he had made it clear at the very start of the provincial campaign that his ideal solution provided for the creation of a single selling agency controlled by the three provinces' pools. In these negotiations Wood and Brownlee represented the Alberta position and, with McPhail of Saskatchewan, were largely responsible for the terms of the

<sup>41</sup>Yates, *Wheat Pool*, pp. 89-90.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 105; Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 220.

<sup>43</sup>Hull, *op. cit.* Oct. 1, 1924, p. 17.

final draft.<sup>44</sup> The agreement, signed August 20, provided for the setting up of a central sales organization, the Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers, Limited. This company was to be owned by the three provincial pools which each subscribed one third of the \$150,000 capital; each provincial association acquired 497 shares of common stock at a par value of \$100 a share; and the three representatives from the provincial pools were each to own one share. Only 10 per cent of the par value was to be actually paid in, the balance was left subject to call if it were needed. The nine pool representatives were to make up the board of directors, and the executive was to consist of one member from each provincial association. The new agency was charged with the marketing of all pool wheat delivered to it at terminal elevator points, with acquiring the necessary terminal facilities, with providing the money necessary to meet the initial payment, and with the establishment of efficient office systems. The provincial pools' work was limited to the maintenance of the provincial contracts and membership, the collection of their members' grain at country elevator points and its transportation to pool terminal elevators, and actual office management. After deducting its expenses, the central agency was to hand over all the profits to the provincial associations proportionate to the amount of grain delivered. Provision was also made for giving the Alberta pool members any extra profit derived from marketing their wheat via Vancouver rather than Fort William. This agreement was to remain in force for four years, but could be terminated anytime that one of the pools gave notice of withdrawal, in writing, three months before July 1.<sup>45</sup>

As one of the leaders in the creation of the Central Selling Agency and an outstanding Canadian advocate of pool methods, Wood was offered the presidency of this new organization; but he declined on the grounds that it should go to McPhail. Saskatchewan was the largest wheat producing area, Regina was closer to Winnipeg than Calgary, and McPhail was the younger man. Moreover, he did not want to leave the U.F.A. organization at

<sup>44</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, pp. 106-7.

<sup>45</sup>Text of the agreement between the three provincial pools making up the Central Selling Agency is to be found in Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, pp. 435-9.

this critical period.<sup>46</sup> Instead, he became vice-president, and C. H. Burnell of Manitoba became secretary. Brownlee was made the general counsel.<sup>47</sup> Earlier the suggestion of the Farmers' Union of Canada that Sapiro be made consulting counsel apparently was quietly vetoed by Wood.<sup>48</sup> Under McPhail's direction steps were taken at once to set the initial price to be paid on the new wheat crop, to arrange for the financing of this payment through bank loans secured by the growers' contracts, and to establish a sales department under a sales manager with headquarters in Winnipeg and with three assistants—two in eastern Canada and one at Calgary. Branch offices were established soon in London and Paris to handle the sale of pool wheat to European buyers and a statistical department was created to forecast Canadian and foreign wheat prospects.<sup>49</sup>

With the setting up of the Central Selling Agency, the first phase of the wheat pool movement came to an end. This period had been devoted largely to organization and the creation of the necessary machinery to handle the farmers' wheat from the farm to its ultimate destination. For the first time in Canadian history an interprovincial co-operative organization had been created which was prepared to market the farmers' wheat at cost and in such a fashion as to return the maximum profit to the individual farmer. The leaders of the provincial pools, especially Wood, had realized that this objective could be fully attained only through such interprovincial co-operation. For this reason the Central Selling Agency had been set up. Its primary purpose "was to adjust the supply of wheat to the true demand for wheat as against speculative and manipulative demands."<sup>50</sup>

The pool system combined two features strongly favoured by Wood—more efficient selling methods and democratic control. The first was achieved through the volume of wheat handled and through the use of one instrument for the marketing of all the Prairie pool wheat. The second was carried out by placing control over the provincial associations in the hands of delegates elected

<sup>46</sup>*Albertan*, Aug. 25, 1924.

<sup>47</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 221.

<sup>48</sup>Telegram of Farmers' Union of Canada, Dec. 11, 1923, proposing Sapiro as wheat pool counsel and Wood's reply, Dec. 15, 1923, opposing it are in Wood Papers.

<sup>49</sup>Yates, *Wheat Pool*, pp. 114-15.

<sup>50</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, p. 438.

by direct postcard vote of all pool members. Alberta was divided into seven districts, and each district was divided into ten sub-districts. The sub-districts each elected one delegate and these seventy delegates chose the seven-man board of directors—one from each district.<sup>51</sup> The disastrous rivalries and absentee ownership which had weakened the farmer-owned grain companies were thus avoided. While willing to pay high salaries to secure competent personnel to run the organization, the pools avoided another serious mistake of the farmer-owned companies—high salaries to their elected officers. Wood and McPhail both refused to use their positions as head of the provincial pool and of the Central Selling Agency as an excuse for demanding large salaries. Throughout the 1920's when the pool was handling literally millions of dollars, Wood continued to serve as chairman of the Alberta Wheat Pool and vice-president of the Central Selling Agency for \$4,000 to \$5,000 a year.

With the creation of the provincial wheat pools in all three Prairie Provinces and the establishment of the Central Selling Agency, the first chapter in the history of the pool movement closed. The new economic organization was now firmly established and the problems which the pools were to face in the succeeding years were connected with how this new instrument was to be operated, not with its organization. Wood recognized this change when he devoted part of his annual address in 1925 to warning the pool associations against embarking on dangerous and financially unsound courses. Now was the "testing time of the wheat pool" and if this method was to continue the farmers must remain loyal to it. Its survival depended on the active support of the individual pool member, not on the work of their leaders. While retaining their control, the members must at the same time allow the management a relatively free hand to follow "sane practical business methods."<sup>52</sup> Wood was afraid either that the democratic character of the pool would be weakened or that under this popular control there would be the equally grave danger of adopting policies which would involve the organization in unsound economic activities. Wood's efforts, therefore, during the next few years were largely devoted to ensuring that the more

<sup>51</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 13, 1924, pp. 3-4.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1925, p. 8.

radical elements within the Alberta Wheat Pool did not get control of the machinery and by unwise business activities wreck the association.

Under his presidency the directors pursued a generally conservative financial and business policy. Primarily, their efforts were devoted to reducing marketing costs, to increasing handling facilities, and to returning a maximum amount to the individual pool farmer. They were notably successful in reaching these objectives. Between 1925 and 1928 the pool farmer received an average price which was generally several cents per bushel higher than that received by non-pool farmers—especially those who sold their wheat during the September-November period. The pool farmers had the advantage of “first, receiving the averaged result of the season’s trading, irrespective of the time or manner of delivering their grain; and second, of sharing in any savings in marketing or handling costs which the Pool (might) be able to realize.”<sup>53</sup> The efficiency of the Alberta Pool was apparent, too, in operating costs which were lower than those of the Saskatchewan and Manitoba pools.<sup>54</sup> Another advantage which the pool member enjoyed was a reduction in the spread among different grades of grain. This result was very important because 1926 and 1927 were years of poor crops from the point of view of quality because the excessive moisture of those years produced a large amount of wheat which graded “tough” or “damp” or else was harmed by rust.

The success of the pool was reflected in the rapid increase in the number of members who signed pool contracts. In 1923 there had been 25,600 members whose contracts covered 2,416,000 acres, but when the First Series Contract ended in 1927 there were 42,200 members representing 3,977,000 acres under contract.<sup>55</sup> The 1925 annual convention reported that only 56 members had been prosecuted or were under consideration for prosecution for breaking contract. In 1926 and 1927 the number was even smaller. During these years Wood worked earnestly to retain the close connection between the Wheat Pool and the U.F.A., and it was due to his influence that all attempts to establish wheat pool

<sup>53</sup>Patton shows that in 1924-5 and 1925-6 Pool payments were several cents above non-Pool prices in those months when 65-70 per cent of the Canadian wheat was marketed. See Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, pp. 341-6.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 349.

<sup>55</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1927-8, p. 540.

locals independent of U.F.A. ones were defeated.<sup>56</sup> He utilized the annual meetings of the U.F.A. to discuss pool policy and he emphasized the fact that the success of the one movement was inextricably bound up with that of the other.

This situation provoked criticism from some, both within and without the pool movement, who felt that the U.F.A. exercised too much influence over the policy and operations of the Wheat Pool. In 1926 Sapiro made a bitter attack on Wood for his conservative elevator and wheat marketing policies. He blamed politics and personal ambitions for weakening the Alberta Wheat Pool and declared that "the Pool [was a] wing of politics rather than an economic system."<sup>57</sup> Wood replied that the Alberta farmers seemed satisfied with his policies and that Sapiro had no right to criticize the Alberta pool. "In simple words, the policy of the Alberta Pool is none of Mr. Sapiro's business and there is no reason whatever why I or any other member of the management should discuss those policies for Mr. Sapiro's benefit."<sup>58</sup> Sapiro's attack had no effect on Wood's authority within the provincial Pool. Its chief result was to widen further the breach between Sapiro and Wood and to prepare the way for the major controversy between them two years later over the compulsory pool question.

Wood also played a prominent role in connection with the development of the Vancouver route as the major outlet for Alberta wheat. The opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 had revolutionized shipping rates from western North America to Europe and the British Isles. Wheat cargo rates from Vancouver to Liverpool were as low or lower than similar rates from Fort William during the 1920's, and it was as cheap to ship grain from the Pacific coast as from the head of the lakes. The only drawback was the high mountain-scale rates prevailing on wheat shipments from Alberta points to Vancouver and Prince Rupert. This discrepancy was removed in 1926 at the suggestion of the Alberta government and rail rates immediately fell from 30 to 40 per cent.<sup>59</sup> A delegation from the Vancouver Board of Trade, headed by Wood's old opponent, James Weir, appeared before the 1927 U.F.A. convention to plead for greater use of this

<sup>56</sup>Alberta Wheat Pool, *Annual Report*, 1927-8, p. 16.

<sup>57</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 15, 1926.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, Nov. 17, 1926.

<sup>59</sup>U.F.A., Jan. 15, 1926, p. 15.

route by the Wheat Pool. Wood, in his reply, made it clear that the Wheat Pool board was not opposed to shipping via Vancouver providing that they could get the necessary rates and service. It was the lack of elevator space, the difficulty of getting cargo space, and the premiums offered by British millers on quick delivery which had so far prevented greater use of Vancouver's facilities.<sup>60</sup> Later that year Wood went to Vancouver and in his address to the Board of Trade there, he made it "almost brutally plain" that the farmers were determined to ship their grain by any route which promised them maximum returns.<sup>61</sup> Partly as a result of Wood's speech, successful efforts were made to improve the port facilities not only at Vancouver but at Prince Rupert also, and by the end of 1928 a large percentage of Alberta wheat was being shipped westward. Moreover, as one consequence of Wood's visit to Japan and China in 1926 a considerable wheat and flour trade between these countries and Canada developed.

Wood's importance to the movement in these years was most apparent, however, in connection with the question of provincial pool elevators and the 1927 sign-up campaign. Wood was determined that this new economic organization would not be ruined by undertaking enterprises for which it was not financially equipped. Therefore he strongly opposed the suggestion that the pool should develop its own system of country elevators. Many farmers felt that the line company elevators took advantage of them to undergrade their wheat. There had been trouble, too, over the question of handling charges for pool and non-pool wheat in connection with special binning and storage. This anti-line elevator feeling was largely responsible for the enactment of a resolution providing for a deduction of 2c. a bushel from the final pool price to form an elevator reserve. At Wood's suggestion, however, the question of constructing a pool elevator was to be left to the discretion of the Wheat Pool board.<sup>62</sup>

The debate over elevator policy was a feature of the 1926 U.F.A. convention where there was general support among the delegates for a resolution favouring the development of a country

<sup>60</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 1, 1927, p. 47.

<sup>61</sup>Clippings from the *Vancouver Star*, March 10, 1927 and the *Vancouver Province*, March 9, 1927, in Wood Papers.

<sup>62</sup>*U.F.A.*, Aug. 15, 1925, pp. 4, 7.



elevator system under pool ownership. Wood, however, sharply criticized it. He declared that pool elevators would not solve the grading problem or prevent the up-grading of non-pool wheat—a practice strongly condemned by the advocates of a pool elevator system. The Calgary Exchange (North-West Line Elevators Association) had always treated the pool fairly and had promised to prohibit proven cases of up-grading of non-pool wheat. He felt that there was serious danger that they might spend so much money acquiring elevators that they would be in no financial position to survive an unexpected crisis. He warned them that if they persisted in their elevator policy “one thing dead sure [they will] have to get a new chairman.” He asserted, too, that “if they had brains enough to do the right thing and support enough from the supporters of the Pool in the western provinces and in Alberta, in particular, to stand beside them until it was done, by the eternal gods it was going to be done.” After this slashing attack the resolution was defeated by a small majority, but the large number of abstentions showed that this result was due largely to personal loyalty to Wood rather than to agreement with his arguments.<sup>63</sup>

Wood's stand on this question, which the *Grain Growers' Guide* described as an act of “high moral courage,” was prompted by his fear that the financial resources of the new organization were not yet sound enough to withstand the hazardous financial experiment of constructing an elevator system.<sup>64</sup> Instead, he and the other pool directors preferred to seek for some arrangement with the U.G.G. in regard to the handling of pool wheat and the eventual purchase of that organization's elevator system. In May, 1926, a special meeting of pool delegates was called which ratified an agreement with the U.G.G. providing for the establishment of a joint operating company to operate all elevators owned by the two organizations. All surplus earnings were to be divided on a pro-rata basis and the U.G.G. was to continue to handle non-pool wheat on a commission basis as before. The agreement was to run for two years, and if satisfactory terms could be arranged the pool was prepared to purchase the U.G.G. elevators at its expira-

<sup>63</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 27, 1926, p. 20.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 27, 1926, p. 5.

tion.<sup>65</sup> This arrangement represented a major victory for Wood and his policy of moderate expansion because it gave the pool access to an extensive country elevator system without the expense involved of constructing it. Unfortunately, the agreement was never ratified because it proved impossible for the two organizations to agree on who was to appoint the manager of the elevator company.<sup>66</sup> At the regular annual meeting of the Wheat Pool in August, the decision was taken to abandon further negotiations and to begin construction of its own elevator system, instead.<sup>67</sup> Wood agreed to this change because the year's delay had greatly strengthened the financial resources of the Wheat Pool, and during the next two years he vigorously pushed the building campaign. By the close of 1928, three hundred and seven country elevators were owned by the pool and in addition a new terminal elevator at Vancouver with a capacity of 5,150,000 bushels.<sup>68</sup> The Alberta Wheat Pool had become a great wheat handling as well as wheat marketing organization. Under Wood's skilful direction these changes had taken place gradually and the loyalty and confidence of the individual farmer to the co-operative marketing ideal, on which in the last analysis the success of the pool depended, had never been lost.

This fact was strikingly demonstrated in 1927 during the second sign-up campaign when the farmers of the province ignored the propaganda attacks of the Northwest Grain Dealers' Association. The latter flooded the province with anti-pool literature, asserting that non-pool farmers got more for their grain and that pool claims were unreliable.<sup>69</sup> Wood replied to this attack by pointing out, from his experience as a member of the Wheat Board, that the use of a single selling agency increased the return to the producer through more systematic marketing and the reduction of incidental charges. He reiterated his belief in the loyalty of the farmers to pool concepts and stated that "it is inconceivable to me that the farmers of Alberta would be so stupid as not to sign the contracts."<sup>70</sup> The success of this new drive showed that Wood's

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, June 1, 1926, p. 3.

<sup>66</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1926-7, p. 465.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 466.

<sup>68</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1928-9, p. 502.

<sup>69</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Dec. 28, 1926; *U.F.A.*, Jan. 15, 1927, p. 9.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, June 15, 1927, pp. 5, 18.

confidence in the intelligence of the farmers was not misplaced. At the 1928 annual meeting Secretary R. O. German reported that over 35,000 farmers representing over 60 per cent of the total wheat acreage of the province were under pool contract.<sup>71</sup>

Five years after the beginning of the first wheat pool campaign the movement was more strongly entrenched in the province than before. Wood, as president of the Board of Directors, deserves to share in the honour accorded to all those responsible. Moreover, through his position and the respect which was paid to his opinions by all the farmers, he was able to exercise a considerable influence over the course of the movement. It is to Wood's great credit that he used this power to the best advantage for the growth of the organization. His insistence on the pool following business methods, his resistance to premature action in the establishment of an elevator system, and, above all, his development of a co-operative spirit among pool members, were to prove of inestimable value in the difficult days ahead.

Wood's role in the development of the Alberta Wheat Pool was only one aspect of his pool activities during these years. As president of the Alberta Wheat Pool he was also vice-president of the Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited, the Central Selling Agency for the three prairie pools. As A. J. McPhail's diary makes clear, Wood took an active part in the formation of Canadian pool selling policy, not always too wisely. In addition, Wood also played an important role in marshalling agrarian support behind changes in the Canada Grain Act wanted by the pools and in resisting other suggestions which would have seriously hampered their operations.

Between 1925-8, the pool movement reached its peak with well over half of all the western Canadian farmers enrolled in the organization. By 1927 these 140,000 farmers, representing 15,000,000 acres under contract, had become the greatest agrarian co-operative movement in the world.<sup>72</sup> With the increase in membership the duties and responsibilities of the officers of the Central Selling Agency increased proportionately. In 1926 and 1927 the pool developed a system of direct sales to English and European millers which considerably reduced its reliance on the

<sup>71</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1928-9, p. 502.

<sup>72</sup>*U.F.A.*, Dec. 1, 1927, p. 20.

Winnipeg Grain Exchange. It opened a number of overseas offices and established sales agencies at New York and Calgary to handle shipments to Europe and to the Pacific countries via Vancouver and Prince Rupert. Through its control of such a large proportion of the total crop the Central Selling Agency was able to reduce the amount of wheat which was actually sold during the fall months although this was the time when the bulk of the western grain was delivered to country elevator points for shipment to the terminal elevators. Under the pool the question of selling during these months was "determined by one, instead of by some 140,000 individual sellers."<sup>73</sup>

Within the Central Selling Agency, however, there were strong and often bitter debates among the members over sales policy. This conflict was due to a fundamental difference in viewpoint between McPhail and Wood over marketing methods. The former believed that the chief virtue of pool operations lay in reducing marketing costs through bulk handling and in securing a high average price for pool farmers. Wood, on the other hand, was anxious to secure the best possible price for pool grain and favoured taking advantage of changes in the market price. "The primary and all-important object is to get a better price for our wheat."<sup>74</sup> In January, 1925, Wood and McPhail seriously disagreed over the former's suggestion to get "long May," that is to buy up contracts calling for the delivery of wheat the following May. McPhail threatened to resign and Wood thereupon withdrew the resolution, but the dispute over selling policy was not ended. Throughout that spring Wood continued to favour a policy of buying May options because he was convinced that wheat was going to rise to \$2 a bushel. McPhail was convinced that this was a mistaken policy which, if persisted in, would lead only to disaster.<sup>75</sup> When prices slumped in the last week in March, Wood was forced to admit a severe blow to the pool.<sup>76</sup> It was able to survive only through skilful manoeuvring and the purchase of Winnipeg wheat for sale on the Chicago market where the price was higher.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>73</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, pp. 266-73.

<sup>74</sup>Speech of H. W. Wood, International Wheat Pool Conference, St. Paul, Minn., *Proceedings*, 1926, p. 65.

<sup>75</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, pp. 115-17.

<sup>76</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, April 1, 1925.

<sup>77</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, pp. 117-18.

After 1925, however, this conflict over sales policy became less acute. Both leaders were in agreement on the necessity of expanding the Central Sales Agency and in developing the policy of direct sales. In 1927 McPhail supported the appointment of George McIvor, from the Calgary office, as successor to D. L. Smith as general sales agent. McIvor was suspected of being "susceptible to the influence of the Alberta group," but McPhail favoured him as "the best real co-ordinator and co-operator on our staff."<sup>78</sup> During these years Wood was actively engaged in supporting the Campbell amendment, which strengthened the general elevator position of the Canadian Wheat Pools, and in resisting the efforts of the Canadian millers to impose an export tax on all Canadian wheat exports.

The conflict over the Campbell amendment once more found Wood and Crerar lined up on opposite sides. Wood was a strong supporter of this amendment because it allowed individual farmers to designate the terminal elevators to which they wanted their grain sent. In 1924-5 the pools had acquired a number of terminal elevators and at once became concerned with the farmer's right to specify to which terminal elevator he wanted his grain shipped. The Canada Grain Act, 1912, had contained a clause allowing either the owner or the elevator company to send his grain in carload lots to any designated terminal. In 1925, as a result of the investigation of the grain trade by the Turgeon Royal Commission, the Grain Act was overhauled and in the process this section was changed, against the wishes of the Commission, to provide that the owner might designate the terminal point but not the elevator to which his grain could be sent.<sup>79</sup> This development was largely the work of the private terminal operators, led by Crerar, anxious to protect their profits from pool terminal operations. Within the Agricultural Committee, Crerar had been the leading opponent of any concessions to the pools. For this he was strongly criticized by many farmers. But he claimed that it was the profits from terminal operations which enabled country elevators to charge such low rates. Any attempt to end these profits would immediately result in a half-cent a bushel rise in the cost of handling non-pool wheat at country elevator points and it would mean

<sup>78</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 171.

<sup>79</sup>Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation*, pp. 263-4.

penalizing non-pool farmers at the expense of pool ones.<sup>80</sup> Crerar's explanation was rejected by the majority of the pool farmers. In Alberta the U.F.A. convention of 1926 criticized him severely for his stand. The action of the Canadian Council of Agriculture in first supporting the Campbell amendment and then reversing its stand was also condemned. The delegates voiced the suspicion that this was due to the fact that the policy of the Council was dictated by the farmer-owned commercial companies.<sup>81</sup>

The Parliamentary struggle over this amendment continued throughout 1926 and 1927. Over the united opposition of the organized grain trade it passed the House of Commons in 1926 only to be held up by the Senate.<sup>82</sup> The Conservative majority there threatened to defeat it unless the Progressives would support the new Meighen government which had been formed as a result of the political crisis arising out of the Customs scandal.<sup>83</sup> (As a result of the wholesale corruption revealed by a Parliamentary committee inquiring into the administration of the Customs Department, the Liberal Cabinet had resigned and a Conservative one taken its place.)<sup>84</sup> The threat failed and, with the defeat of the Meighen administration by a combination of Liberal and Progressive votes, Parliament was dissolved with the amendment still unpassed. The return of the Liberal party in the ensuing general election was the signal for renewed efforts by the Wheat Pool to secure this right. McPhail and other Wheat Pool officials visited Ottawa and brought sufficient pressure to bear to secure the legislation in 1927. The amendment passed the House of Commons with little difficulty, but the efforts of the grain trade nearly succeeded in defeating it in the Senate. Approval was given by the narrow margin of one vote, 14-13.<sup>85</sup>

The victory of the pools in this contest was a signal indication of the political influence that the organized farmers still exercised over federal affairs, despite the virtual disappearance of the Progressive party, outside of Alberta. The failure of the campaign

<sup>80</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 26, 1925, p. 4.

<sup>81</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1926, p. 7.

<sup>82</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1926, vol. 5, p. 4360.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, session 1926, vol. 5, p. 5077.

<sup>84</sup>For a discussion of the origin and character of this political crisis, see *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1925-6, pp. 53-67.

<sup>85</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, pp. 151-2.

of the Canadian milling industry to put a tax on Canadian wheat exports was further proof of the farmers' power. This idea had been advanced by the Turgeon Commission on the grain trade with the object of preventing American millers from importing Canadian wheat, mixing it with inferior American varieties and selling it as flour milled from Canadian hard spring wheat. The Canadian millers supported the proposal enthusiastically. They wanted a duty high enough to counterbalance the duty imposed by American authorities on Canadian flour imported into the United States. In January, 1926, a meeting took place between Wheat Pool officials and representatives of the milling industry at which the latter proposed asking for government legislation establishing an export duty on all wheat shipped from Canada to American mills. They stressed the fact that British bakers wanted Canadian-milled Spring Wheat flour. Wood at once announced his opposition. He pointed out that any attempt to interfere with the free flow of wheat would be harmful to the price received by the Canadian farmer. If the millers persisted in their programme the farmers and other farm organizations would oppose them with all their strength and would only be defeated by "overcoming brute force."<sup>86</sup>

Wood first publicly attacked the millers' idea at the 1926 annual convention of the U.F.A. where he stated that the suggested export duty on wheat was an "infamous proposal" designed to rob the wheat grower for the benefit of the miller.<sup>87</sup> During the spring he continued his campaign against the proposed levy. He rejected the millers' arguments on the necessity of the duty to protect them from American competition abroad. He pointed out that, although American millers could import wheat duty free when it was to be milled for export, Canadian millers still enjoyed a competitive advantage because they had the opportunity to get the wheat first and had the necessary elevator facilities to handle it. Moreover, if the duty was imposed on export of Canadian wheat to the United States, it might also be imposed on Canadian wheat exports to other countries. If the market for Canadian wheat was restricted by government action, the chief sufferer would be the

<sup>86</sup>Clipping from the *Canadian Milling and Grain Journal*, April 15, 1926, in Wood Papers.

<sup>87</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 15, 1926, pp. 12-13.

farmer. It was immoral and wrong for the milling industry to seek to exploit the wheat grower for its own benefit.<sup>88</sup> Despite his criticism, many farmers and even some officers of the U.F.A., continued to give considerable support to the imposition of this tax on wheat exports to the United States. But Wood reiterated his opposition to a measure which he considered "criminally wrong." So obnoxious did he become to the milling industry that the *Canadian Milling and Grain Journal* described him as "an American wolf in the Canadian sheep-fold in the skin of a Missouri mule."<sup>89</sup> The millers attempted to prove that Wood's American antecedents were responsible for his opposition, but this plan met with as little success as similar charges during the height of the political agitation of the early 1920's. Wood's strong condemnation of the scheme, which was endorsed by many western newspapers including the *Calgary Herald*, proved effective, and during the summer the whole idea was quietly dropped.

During the later twenties Wood was recognized as one of the most powerful and influential figures in the Wheat Pool organization and the *Calgary Herald* observed in 1926: "H. W. Wood is the strongest individual force in the farmer movement in Canada."<sup>90</sup> But his role was primarily that of propagandist for the idea of co-operation and the extension of pool contacts with other nations; after 1926 he left the formation of selling policy largely to McPhail and to the pool officials. Under his direction an efficient business organization was created in Alberta which reduced operating costs to less than half a cent a bushel by 1928.<sup>91</sup> He was active also in promoting the marketing of Canadian wheat in the Orient, which he visited in 1926, and in England and Europe when he went there in 1928. Perhaps his most distinctive contribution, however, was his emphasis on the value of co-operative marketing at the several international wheat marketing conferences which were held at this time.

The wheat pool movement was not confined to Canada. The post-war decline in agricultural prices had sent farmers and farm organizations all over the world searching for some solution to

<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.*, April 1, 1926, pp. 1, 20; *ibid.*, April 15, 1926, pp. 1, 20, 21.

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, May 15, 1926, p. 5.

<sup>90</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 20, 1926.

<sup>91</sup>W. A. Irwin, "The Wheat Pools," *Maclean's Magazine*, July 1, 1929.



their marketing problem. The pool method for marketing grain was developed in Australia and the United States as well as in Canada, but it was much more successful in Canada than anywhere else. In Australia, the co-operative societies exercised a controlling influence over pool operations, while in the United States, the pool movement did not progress beyond the state-wide organization stage. In neither country was there an overall organization comparable to the Central Selling Agency of the Canadian Wheat Pools.

With the extension of the pool movement came a movement for international co-operation among the various national bodies. At St. Paul, Minnesota, an international wheat pool conference was held in February, 1926. Delegates were present representing Canada, the United States, Australia, and the U.S.S.R. Wood attended and took a prominent part in the discussion on pool selling policy. He asserted that if the four great wheat producing countries of the world would co-operate or even if Canada, Australia, and the United States would do so it would be possible to raise the world price of wheat. "If this wheat was sold intelligently, systematically and fed to the consumptive demand, just as that demand developed, we could maintain the price of our wheat on a level with the prices we have to pay, and we would not need any legislation to assist us in doing that either." He went on to declare that this method would remove the advantage that the wheat buyer enjoyed under the present system of marketing and that the "three great English speaking countries . . . can raise the price of wheat at least fifty per cent above the level of the price that has been maintained through the old system."<sup>92</sup>

In the discussion which followed his address general approval of his ideas was expressed by the other delegates. Wood, himself, concluded the debate by a few further remarks during which he emphasized the need for following practical business methods if the objective of better prices was to be attained. He warned them against paying too much attention to the impractical men who were also usually the most vociferous. To do so would be like the man who "drained a pond because he thought he was going to get a carload of frogs and he found three little frogs, whereas he

<sup>92</sup>Wheat Pool Conference, St. Paul, *Proceedings*, 1926, pp. 65-70.

thought the pond was full. You can never tell the number of frogs in a pond by the noise."<sup>93</sup> Throughout the conference it was clear that the success of the Canadian wheat pool movement was the envy of the other delegates. The Canadian representatives enjoyed a prestige which none of the others had and were the leaders of nearly every discussion. No attempt was made to set up any international co-operative organization, but the conference did enable pool officials from the different countries to meet and discuss their problems in regard to wheat marketing.

One result of the closer connection among the various national pools was Wood's visit to Australia in the fall of 1926. The Australian farm leaders were anxious for two representatives from Canada to visit them and explain to the Australian farmers how the Canadian system worked.<sup>94</sup> Wood spent nearly two months there and spoke before agrarian organizations in New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia. He found that the large farms in eastern Australia, the concentration on wool production there, and the lack of a unified railway system, all militated against the development of an effective co-operative movement. In Western Australia, however, the pool movement was much stronger. Wheat growing was a comparatively recent development and wheat exports were still small. The farmers there were very much interested in the pool method because they were discontented with eastern Australia which they felt was exploiting them. To Wood it was the "Alberta of Australia."<sup>95</sup> Australian farm leaders were impressed with his zeal for co-operation, and T. H. Bath of the Western Australian Farmers' Wheat Pool declared that Wood's visit had left a lasting impression.<sup>96</sup>

The value of the St. Paul conference was noted at the opening of the second international co-operative wheat pool conference held at Kansas City, Missouri, in May, 1927. The chairman reported the formation of a South-West Co-operative Wheat Growers' Association to handle the winter wheat of four states—Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska. In Australia the two pools

<sup>93</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 78-82.

<sup>94</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Feb. 22, 1926.

<sup>95</sup>Speech of Wood at Wheat Pool banquet, Nov. 18, 1926, manuscript in Wood Papers.

<sup>96</sup>*U.F.A.*, July 4, 1927, p. 10.

of Victoria had amalgamated and, as a result of the visits of Wood and George Robertson of Saskatchewan, there had been a marked increase in sentiment in favour of the contract pool method of wheat marketing.<sup>97</sup> At this second international conference, discussion centred on the development of co-operative marketing and the possibility of creating an international wheat pool. Wood's address was devoted principally to analysing how best to bring agricultural prices into equilibrium with those of finished goods. This could be achieved most effectively through the development of co-operative methods of marketing. He reiterated the necessity of following business practices, but opposed the merging of all pool units into a single unit. He did not consider this solution practicable. "If what is meant by a world-wide wheat pool is the merging of all co-operative wheat selling into one pool unit under some kind of central management, then I am unalterably opposed to it." On the other hand, he favoured the development of pool units which would place control over the marketing of the farmers' wheat in the hands of the producers rather than the buyers. He quoted with approval a dispatch from Scotland which credited the Canadian Wheat Pool with maintaining a higher wheat price than would have existed in a free market.<sup>98</sup> Other speakers at the conference reviewed the development of the co-operative marketing method in their country or state, and emphasized the desirability of closer co-ordination between the different national wheat pools. There was little support for a single, world-wide wheat pool, however. The conference adopted a resolution advocating the utmost encouragement of the co-operative movement and the establishment of a "permanent international bureau which will act as a clearing house for statistical information, matters relating to the development of international co-operation, and such other matters as may be of mutual benefit to the world co-operative movement."<sup>99</sup>

Unfortunately, the promising beginning in the direction of international co-operation was not followed up at the 1928 conference which was held at Regina, Saskatchewan. At this meeting

<sup>97</sup>Second International Co-operative Wheat Pool Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, *Proceedings*, 1927, p. 9.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 19-26.

<sup>99</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 149-50.

the decision was taken not to set up an international statistical bureau, but to rely on the statistical department of the Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers, Limited. Moreover, this conference was not limited to wheat pool representatives, but included delegates from other producer pools as well as co-operative consumers' buying organizations. Emphasis at this meeting was concentrated on the establishment of national pool organizations and the creation of an international organization representing all branches of the co-operative movement.<sup>100</sup> Wood's role was confined chiefly to an address urging the superiority of the co-operative method over the competitive way.<sup>101</sup>

This meeting was destined to be the last one, however. Before plans for the next one could be completed, the Canadian pools were involved in the financial crisis arising out of the 1929 overpayment and the sharp price decline of 1929-30. The ideal of international marketing control was abandoned, to be revived again in the present era with the effort to negotiate an international wheat price and marketing agreement. Wood's hopes for some form of international marketing accord, based on co-operation of national units, proved impossible of attainment. When the movement was revived, it was under the sponsorship of the governments, not of the farmer-controlled wheat pools.

Wood was closely connected with the whole course of the Wheat Pool movement, from the early attempts in 1920 and 1921 down to the great international movement of 1927 and 1928. It was in the fall of 1919 when he attended his first pool meetings in Washington that he became acquainted with this method of grain marketing. During the conflicts of the early twenties, he had continuously supported the contract pool as the most democratic and satisfactory way to solve the problem. In the great campaign of 1923, he had taken a prominent role. Under the spell of Sapiro's oratory farmers, professional men, merchants, grain dealers, bankers, and newspaper publishers had all played their part, but none more conspicuously or effectively than Wood. His social and political ideas and the political success of the

<sup>100</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1927-8, p. 478.

<sup>101</sup>Speech of H. W. Wood, First International Pool Conference and Third International Wheat Pool Conference, Regina, Saskatchewan, *Proceedings*, 1928, pp. 28-30.

U.F.A. had already given him a position of unique influence among the farmers of the province. Therefore, his support of the pool went far to ensure acceptance of this new method.

Once the wheat pool was established, Wood had immediately taken his place as one of the leaders of the new organization. As president of the Alberta Wheat Pool and vice-president of the Central Selling Agency, he was looked upon as one of the most important figures in the pool system. He had taken an active interest in it and had used his influence to direct the movement into proper channels. He was very anxious that the pool should not fail through the adoption of unwise business practices and his influence, both in Alberta and within the Canadian pool as a whole, was always on the side of caution and against rash experiments. He supported the development of the pool idea in other countries and favoured the creation of an international wheat pool organization, provided it did not attempt to control national pool policy. Such an effort he regarded as impractical and liable to subject the national pools to unwarranted risks. Wood's conspicuous role in building up the wheat pool not only helped make that system successful, but also helped preserve his influence within the Canadian agrarian movement. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba the rise of the wheat pool was accompanied by a corresponding decline in farmer support of independent political action. Such was not the case in Alberta where Wood used his influence to keep the farmers loyal to agrarian political and economic co-operation as a joint movement. The history of the political and economic activities of the Alberta farmers during the 1920's reveals the success of his endeavours.

## *Chapter Eight*

# “UNCROWNED KING OF ALBERTA”

DURING THE TWENTIES Wood's influence over the farmers of Alberta was so great that many observers referred to him as the "boss" of the province. As head of the U.F.A. and of the Alberta Wheat Pool he occupied the two most influential positions within the provincial agrarian movement. He succeeded in uniting the political and economic sides of the farmers' organization in support of his philosophy of co-operation because he convinced the farmer that in group solidarity lay both political and economic salvation. He carefully subordinated both political and economic problems to the general supervision of the parent association—the United Farmers of Alberta. As long as this alliance was maintained and Wood continued to direct, his influence within the province was supreme. It was his leadership which enabled the political movement to survive the troubles of 1925-6 and to escape fusion with the Liberal party. The U.F.A. emerged from the crisis with its hold on the province unimpaired. With this danger surmounted Wood gradually withdrew from politics (which he had never really enjoyed) and devoted most of his time to looking after the economic phases of the agrarian movement. He had used his influence chiefly to establish the U.F.A. political organization on a democratic foundation and to prevent its destruction through rash and ill-considered decisions by its supporters. In 1930 he declared that "the contribution I have made has been to hold you back all I possibly could in order to avoid the mistakes that grow out of premature action."<sup>1</sup> Except in moments of stress he was content to abstain from interference in either federal or provincial politics. He preferred to turn over control of political

<sup>1</sup>U.F.A., Feb. 1, 1930, p. 26.

action to the capable leadership of Gardiner in federal affairs and Brownlee in provincial matters. By the close of the decade Wood's political influence was much less, but the U.F.A. continued to be the backbone of the “farmers in politics” and Wood's philosophy of group action still remained the basis of organization.

His influential position within the U.F.A. was not maintained without conflict for not all members of the association were willing to accept Wood's ideas on political and economic organization, particularly his emphasis on “gradualism” as the only way to cure the farmers' ills. Despite the seemingly radical nature of his political appeal with its emphasis on economic group solidarity, Wood was essentially a conservative in political and economic matters. Throughout his years of power within the U.F.A. his influence was always exerted on the side of moderation and against any extreme solution to the farmers' troubles. Nowhere was this more apparent than at the 1923 annual convention.

Three years of poor crops and low prices had produced a serious agricultural depression in Alberta and the farmers were desperately seeking for a way out of their difficulties. The five hundred and fifty delegates who gathered in Calgary in January, 1923, were in a grim mood. They listened with approval to Wood's presidential address in which he attacked the theory of economic cycles as a “vicious circle” and called on the farmers to create a new social organization. He attributed the fall in membership to economic distress and not to any loss of confidence in the organization. He warned them against attempts of politicians both within and without the farmers' movement to get the organization to withdraw from politics. Such a course would destroy the U.F.A. through a conflict of loyalties between it and the political party system. Then he proceeded to attack the government's immigration programme on the grounds that what Canada needed was better living conditions for her present farming population, not an increase in its numbers. This would tend only to lower the general standard of living of all the farmers to the peasant level. The whole speech was a plea that the farmers be loyal to their organization for through co-operation they would find the solution to their problems. “If we be true to our cause, the upward way will not deter us; the giants cannot overcome us.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1923, pp. 4 ff.

The delegates, however, wanted action as well as words. They shared Wood's belief in the value of co-operation, but they also wanted to use their newly acquired political influence to secure certain concrete reforms. Resolutions were adopted demanding the re-establishment of the Wheat Board on a federal or provincial basis, the establishment of a provincial bank of note issue, and the creation of a federal farm loan corporation to provide loans at low interest rates. Even more radical resolutions were introduced, such as providing for the extension of the Drought Relief Act to all sections of the province and for long term loans financed through provincial bond issues. After Brownlee pointed out how provincial credit was endangered by such resolutions, the convention, under the pressure of the executive, voted to table these. There was also a sharp attack on the Canadian Council of Agriculture because of the presence of the commercial farmer companies in it. A resolution was passed, over Wood's objection, in favour of establishing a new national agricultural body independent of the United Grain Growers and the other farmer-owned companies.<sup>3</sup> The convention also showed unexpected independence when it rejected Wood's proposal for the election of the executive by the Board of Directors. Instead, the existing system of direct election by the convention was retained. For the first time since becoming president in 1916 Wood found his request overruled by the convention. On the other hand, he was re-elected president by acclamation when George Bevington withdrew from the contest after nominations were closed.<sup>4</sup> Although Rice Shepard protested bitterly, the convention refused to rescind the motion against further nominations.<sup>5</sup> The delegates' failure to adopt a more radical programme of economic reform was apparently due largely to their confidence in Wood and his leader-

<sup>3</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 19, 1923; *ibid.*, July 20, 1923; *ibid.*, July 23, 1923.

<sup>4</sup>George Bevington had been an influential member of the agrarian movement since the war years when he was active in the Non-Partisan League. He was a leading advocate of the Social Credit doctrines of Major Douglas and had written several articles for the *Grain Growers' Guide* and other western farm papers on the subject. In 1923, at the request of the Alberta members of the Banking and Commerce Committee, he had appeared before the Committee and explained his theory of credit reform. At the 1923 U.F.A. convention Bevington was the leader of the movement for radical financial reforms and the use of federal and provincial credit to provide economic aid to the hard-pressed farmers of the province.

<sup>5</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 24, 1923, pp. 17-18.



ship. One disappointed radical delegate asserted bitterly that they acted on blind faith instead of reason and that few of the members appreciated the underlying significance of their movement.<sup>6</sup>

The convention of 1923 was the first which clearly showed the extremist attitude of many Alberta farmers on financial matters. Alberta had been more affected than other regions by the decline in farm income during the early 1920's because the province was still largely a frontier area and therefore dependent to a considerable degree on outside credit for its development. Prevailing interest rates were very high, varying from 8 to 12 per cent on the debt which had been incurred during the war period when prices were high and crops were good.<sup>7</sup> With the fall in farm prices these rates became a crushing burden for the farmer. The desperate need for some method of reducing this financial load explains why the U.F.A. representatives in Parliament were more concerned than other Progressives with financial reform. The critical attitude of the convention towards existing agrarian leadership was due as much to the latter's lukewarm support of credit amendments as to their stand on the Wheat Board bill. Many delegates also objected to Wood's emphasis on co-operation as the best method of solving their economic difficulties. They wanted legislative action and counted on their U.F.A. representatives at Edmonton and Ottawa to provide it for them.

With the establishment of the Wheat Pool and an improvement in agricultural conditions the influence of this radical element largely disappeared. The 1924 convention was much quieter in tone though rumblings from the previous meeting were still heard. The radicals renewed their attack on Wood and criticized his attempt to head both the U.F.A. and the Wheat Pool as too much for any individual—even Henry Wise Wood. Wood defended his position and pointed out the need for co-operation between the two farmer organizations if confusion and wasted effort were to be avoided. He reiterated his faith in the importance of the U.F.A. “This organization is the child of my heart and the hope of my life,” he declared.<sup>8</sup> The strength of his hold on the convention was reflected in his triumphant re-election as president

<sup>6</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 27, 1925.

<sup>7</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1925, vol. 3, p. 2501.

<sup>8</sup>U.F.A., Feb. 1, 1924, p. 19.

by 429 to 67 votes for his three opponents—Bevington, Jackman, and Harris. His opposition to the resolution in favour of a provincial bank was sufficient to end any further discussion of that question; and the action of the Board of Directors in disobeying the resolution of the 1923 convention in favour of moving the provincial headquarters to Edmonton, was upheld by a large majority. This was one of the resolutions that Wood had unsuccessfully opposed in 1923.<sup>9</sup> The outcome of the convention, which found Wood's power unshaken, was somewhat a surprise to many outside observers. The sharp fall in membership in 1923 and the strong criticism of the political activities of the U.F.A. caused many to hope that the organization would repudiate Wood's group action ideas. Instead a resolution was passed making the political dues a part of the general U.F.A. fee.<sup>10</sup> Wood's hold over the association was consolidated, not weakened, and he had shown that he was able to use the democratic procedure of the U.F.A. in choosing its officers and conducting its business to maintain his direction of the farmers' movement.<sup>11</sup>

With the defeat of the radical wing at the 1924 convention came a period of comparative calm as far as Wood's position in the U.F.A. was concerned. During these years he withdrew more and more from active participation in association affairs and devoted his energies to building up the Wheat Pool. He left the running of the organization largely to Vice-President Scholefield and to the Board of Directors. In 1926 he at last succeeded in getting a resolution passed which placed the election of the executive, apart from the president, in the hands of the directors. He pointed out that it was absurd for an executive responsible to this board to be chosen by the annual convention.<sup>12</sup> Except on rare occasions, such as the conflict over political organization or the question of pool elevator policy, Wood seldom intervened directly in the affairs of the convention. When he did, he was invariably successful in forcing his point of view. His presidential addresses were largely devoted to a review of political and economic achievements of the U.F.A. and to exhortations to the farm-

<sup>9</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 23, 1924, p. 7; *Edmonton Journal*, Jan. 19, 1924.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1924.

<sup>11</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Jan. 25, 1924.

<sup>12</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 27, 1926, p. 21.

ers to remain loyal to their association. The continued strength and influence of the U.F.A. he regarded as proof of the farmers' loyalty to their parent organization. "They have come up through the crucial test, through deflation, drought and some through poverty unspeakable . . . I do not think the membership of any organization ever came through so crucial a test and held so true."<sup>13</sup>

The strength of Wood's influence in the U.F.A. was increased by the success of the Alberta farmers in maintaining their political control at Edmonton and their farm bloc at Ottawa. His power was even more assured when many of the more radical members joined a new organization—the Farmers' Union of Canada. This body had replaced the old Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association as the official spokesman of that province's wheat growers. Under C. H. Harris of Oyen, formerly one of the most radical members of the U.F.A., it had acquired a number of recruits in Alberta. This organization emphasized economic action and was an outspoken advocate of the Wheat Pool. At the 1928 convention a lively discussion was held over whether the U.F.A. should withdraw from the Canadian Council of Agriculture and support this new body. Wood admitted that there were defects in the Council, but declared that not all the opposition to the Wheat Pool came from "company" men among its members, as had been alleged. At his suggestion the whole question was referred to a special committee which was to examine it and report at the next meeting.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, he was opposed to any amalgamation with the F.U. of C. because of its centralized organization and he thought that "the Provincial unit was the largest unit it is possible to control as one organization."<sup>15</sup>

Although the convention of 1928 showed some irritation at the conservative economic policy pursued by Wood and the executive, they gave little support to Carl Axelson in his attack on the leadership of the organization.<sup>16</sup> The only sign of radicalism was

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1925, p. 18.

<sup>14</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 16, 1928, p. 36.

<sup>15</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1927-8, p. 539.

<sup>16</sup>Axelson had become the leader of the radical wing of the U.F.A. and throughout the late 1920's remained a stubborn and bitter opponent of Wood's policies, which he considered too mild and conservative to bring about any lasting improvement in the farmers' position.

the passage of a resolution in favour of federal aid to the sugar beet industry and one favouring official recognition of Communist Russia. Another resolution favouring the establishment of parliamentary representation on a class rather than a geographical basis was tabled at Wood's request. He felt that it was too theoretical and that the people already had the right to nominate and elect their own representatives.<sup>17</sup> Wood's influence, despite virtual retirement from active direction, was still paramount in the U.F.A. All attempts by the radicals to change the course of the organization failed. They were unable to convert it into a vehicle for the advancement of the farmers' more extreme demands in regard to the wheat pool, provincial banks, and federal farm loans. This was largely because of Wood's ascendancy over the individual farmers within the association. If "the chief" did not believe in the value of a particular reform, the vast majority of the delegates usually rejected it. Moreover, Wood had the knack of presenting clearly the consequences of a proposed measure. As long as Wood was head of the U.F.A., the conventions were rarely carried away by emotional appeals into endorsing policies the results of which they could not foresee.

The victory of the U.F.A. in the provincial election of 1921 resulted in large measure from the popularity of Wood's doctrine of group solidarity. The new government was expected to avoid the political methods of the party system and to introduce greater political democracy into provincial politics. As an earnest of its intentions the provincial cabinet included Alex Ross, Labour M.L.A. from Calgary, as Minister of Labour and spokesman of organized labour.<sup>18</sup> During the period 1922-5 the U.F.A. administration conscientiously attempted to carry out this pledge. It introduced legislation providing for the transferable vote in rural constituencies and proportional representation in Calgary and Edmonton. It lowered the residence period required for voting, abolished election deposits, and increased the statutory time which had to elapse between the announcement of the election and the actual voting day.<sup>19</sup> These measures were all designed to remedy abuses which the farmers attributed to the operation of the party

<sup>17</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 1, 1928, p. 36.

<sup>18</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1921, p. 856.

<sup>19</sup>*U.F.A.*, March 18, 1924, p. 4.

system. The government also made a great effort to balance the budget by reducing the high cost of government and by finding some solution to the railway problem. The latter, a legacy from the Liberal administration, was the result of the reckless guarantees made to the promoters of the Peace River district railways in the pre-war years. The failure of these lines had left the province with a heavy burden of fixed charges which made the Cabinet very anxious to avoid all undertakings likely to increase the provincial debt. To help achieve these goals, they relied heavily on Wood's co-operation because of his influence over the farmers of the province.

Relations between the U.F.A. and the provincial government were correct and cordial but far from intimate, despite the allegations to the contrary by the Liberal opposition. In his 1922 presidential address Wood defined the relationship between the farmer association and the provincial government as one between parent and child. The provincial government must govern in the interests not merely of the farmer but of the province as a whole. The U.F.A.'s duty was to watch over the government and to make sure that it was responsive to the wishes of the people. On the other hand, the government should not be made a purely U.F.A. organization. Appointments in the civil service, for example, should be made on a basis of merit, not on loyalty to the U.F.A.<sup>20</sup>

Wood used his influence during the first farmer administration to prevent any serious rift between the association and the provincial government. When a number of U.F.A. locals protested against the legislators voting themselves a special indemnity of \$250,000 in 1922, Wood sought to minimize the seriousness of the step taken. He emphasized the responsibilities of the legislators and asked the locals to consider the whole question of how much the members should be paid.<sup>21</sup> Again in 1923, he aided Brownlee when the latter opposed the financial resolutions which would have ruined the province's credit. When the farmers' support and enthusiasm for political action declined, Wood attempted to revive their interest and to strengthen the connection between the U.F.A. organization and the provincial government. At the 1924 convention he had supported a resolution which made the annual

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1922, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1922, p. 1.

membership fee cover the political, as well as other, activities of the U.F.A.<sup>22</sup> In his presidential address he had defended it as the symbol of the rejection of the political autocracy of the party system.<sup>23</sup> He also participated actively in the Grouard by-election in 1924 in support of James Culle and called on the farmers to vote for the U.F.A. candidate because of the provincial government's aid to the Wheat Pool.<sup>24</sup> In an article in *The U.F.A.* he outlined the relationship between the U.F.A. organization and the farmer government. He pointed out that, while control of the nomination and election of candidates was a matter for the district associations to handle, all these candidates were bound by the resolutions of the annual meeting which was the official expression of U.F.A. policy. He maintained that the district associations were subject to the authority of the organization as a whole.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the efforts of the Liberals to drive a wedge between the U.F.A. and the provincial government and despite the occasional friction between the "back-benchers" and the Cabinet over policy, the farmer representatives maintained their cohesion. They found the much maligned secret caucus a useful method in this regard. W. H. Shields of Macleod even defended it as a democratic instrument since it gave individual members the opportunity to make their opinions known to the Cabinet.<sup>26</sup> The U.F.A. annual convention under Wood's control rejected any resolution which contained the slightest hint of criticism of the provincial government. While Wood kept himself modestly in the background, it was noticeable that every time a Cabinet minister was interviewed Wood was called into the conversation if in the vicinity.<sup>27</sup>

Wood's close ties with the provincial government were demonstrated during the crisis over the premiership in November-December, 1925. Greenfield had not proved to be an unqualified success as provincial leader. He showed a lack of attention to public affairs which involved the government in considerable criticism and caused the Liberal opposition to assert that the people

<sup>22</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Jan. 23, 1924, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1924, p. 9.

<sup>24</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, July 7, 1924. Despite Wood's aid Culle was beaten by James Girouard, Liberal.

<sup>25</sup>*U.F.A.*, Aug. 15, 1924, pp. 8-9.

<sup>26</sup>Clipping from *Vegreville Observer*, Dec. 9, 1925, in Wood Papers.

<sup>27</sup>*Albertan*, Jan. 26, 1925.

had lost faith in the administrative ability of the government.<sup>28</sup> Distrust of Greenfield's leadership increased when he sponsored a resolution in favour of greater immigration. This was diametrically opposed to a resolution on the same subject adopted by the U.F.A. convention.<sup>29</sup> By October rumours were circulating that Greenfield was about to retire and that Brownlee, whom Wood had favoured in the first place, would succeed him as Premier.<sup>30</sup> On November 23 came the expected announcement of Greenfield's resignation and the elevation of Attorney-General Brownlee to the premiership.<sup>31</sup>

This change was initiated by the provincial representatives who felt that Greenfield was not adhering closely enough to Wood's group action theories. Moreover, he did not show sufficient vigour in his handling of the thorny railway negotiations connected with the operation of the Peace River railways.<sup>32</sup> Brownlee was not a party to this revolt and at first wanted to resign too. Wood, however, who was immediately sent for, persuaded him to stay on and to take the premiership in the interest of party harmony.<sup>33</sup>

The elevation of Brownlee to leadership in provincial affairs considerably strengthened the political position of the U.F.A. in the province while reducing Wood's influence. Brownlee was a strong supporter of group action. Under his direction the provincial organization was improved and close ties maintained with the U.F.A. and the Wheat Pool. At the same time he was a definite personality, determined to rule the province as he saw fit. This suited Wood perfectly because he was too much involved in Wheat Pool affairs to wish to exercise any considerable influence over politics, providing his cherished ideal of group action was accepted.

The value of this political arrangement was clearly shown during the provincial election of 1926. Brownlee had vigorously attacked the problem of provincial expenditures and had succeeded in producing a surplus of \$188,000 instead of the expected de-

<sup>28</sup>U.F.A., March 25, 1925, p. 8.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, March 18, 1925, p. 5.

<sup>30</sup>*Albertan*, Oct. 12, 1925.

<sup>31</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 23, 1925.

<sup>32</sup>U.F.A., Dec. 1, 1925, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>Interview with J. E. Brownlee, July 20, 1948.

ficit. He also succeeded in reaching an agreement with the Royal Bank by which the province gained complete control of the Peace River railways for \$1,275,000 cash.<sup>34</sup> In his election manifesto he pointed to the improvement in provincial finances and in political morality as the achievement of the group method of government over the party system. The issue was co-operative government versus party government.<sup>35</sup> In an address at High River, Wood supported this appeal and declared that the farmers must maintain their political power if they wished to retain their economic gains, including the Wheat Pool. He asserted that the political parties were trying to destroy the U.F.A. by waging a campaign of propaganda and by seeking to create distrust and confusion not only between the farmers and the U.F.A. but also within the U.F.A. He reiterated his appeal to the urban dwellers to organize on an independent basis and meet with the farmer members in the Legislature so that problems could be solved through common adjustments.<sup>36</sup>

Wood campaigned actively throughout the province and everywhere he went he was received with an enthusiasm reminiscent of the halcyon days of 1921. There was a sharp spurt in U.F.A. memberships and the U.F.A. once more carried out its effective work of local organization. The results showed that Wood's ideas had not lost their appeal for rural Alberta. The U.F.A. representation was increased from 39 to 43 members and the organization carried every rural seat but four.<sup>37</sup> It was a magnificent vindication of Wood and Brownlee. As Wood pointed out, it was the first time that an agrarian party had emerged from a second election stronger than before. He attributed it, and rightly, to the strength of the organization based on common economic interests and to general disgust with methods and tactics of the old political parties.<sup>38</sup> The success of the Wheat Pool movement was a further factor in this victory because most of the leaders of the pool were also active within the U.F.A. and it was only natural for the farmers to associate the success of the one with the aid

<sup>34</sup>U.F.A., Feb. 12, 1926, p. 1; *ibid.*, June 3, 1926, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup>*Calgary Herald*, June 26, 1926.

<sup>36</sup>U.F.A., June 17, 1926, p. 10.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, July 2, 1926, p. 22.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, July 2, 1926, p. 1.



given it by the other.<sup>39</sup> Despite the efforts of the *Calgary Herald* and other papers to keep the Wheat Pool out of politics it was inevitable that the farmers who supported the agrarian economic movement also tended to support the agrarian political movement, especially as Wood was head of both organizations.

The triumph of 1926 assured the farmers of four more years of power at Edmonton and strengthened the position of the farmers' political movement in the province. In the new Cabinet Alex Ross was replaced as Minister of Labour by O. L. McPherson, a leading figure in the U.F.A. delegation and the former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.<sup>40</sup> Brownlee apparently was determined to govern the province through the farmers' movement exclusively. Under his capable guidance friction between the administration and the grain grower organizations practically disappeared. In the difficult days of 1929 and 1930 this close alliance between Brownlee and Wood proved of inestimable value in maintaining the political and economic position of the U.F.A. and the Alberta Wheat Pool. Wood was content to leave the direction of provincial affairs to Brownlee, and he used his influence to keep the latter in office in Edmonton rather than having him become general manager of the Canadian Wheat Pools.<sup>41</sup> With Wood in control of the U.F.A. and Brownlee of the provincial government, the supremacy of the farmers' movement was assured as far as provincial politics were concerned. Moreover, as long as Wood was head of the provincial association, there was little or no danger that a radical policy would be adopted by the farmers which, in turn, might force the government to break with its parent body or to follow a course which might alienate its non-U.F.A. supporters.

Within the federal sphere Wood's influence was equally important in securing the survival of the U.F.A. as an independent agrarian political movement. At a time when internal friction and treachery were destroying it elsewhere, the farmers' movement in Alberta continued to dominate the political scene. The breach within the provincial organization had been temporarily healed by the Declaration of Principles of 1925, but the old wounds still festered beneath the surface. The division between the "Ginger

<sup>39</sup>Interview with L. Hutchinson, Aug. 14, 1948.

<sup>40</sup>U.F.A., Jan. 15, 1927, p. 9.

<sup>41</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, p. 157.

Group" and the other Alberta members remained, the latter continuing to attend the Progressive caucus on the grounds that the new agreement did not become operative until the next general election.<sup>42</sup> The "Ginger Group" were very critical of this move because of the pro-Liberal policy of the Progressives. Agnes Macphail described the latter as the "pale shadow of the government" and Irvine, over the protest of Speakman and Kellner, accused the agrarian party of deserting their political principles.<sup>43</sup> That J. F. Johnston and seventeen Progressives, including Jelliff of Lethbridge, supported the stand-pat Robb budget gave considerable colour to these charges. Although Johnston was forced to resign after a stormy eight-hour session, he received strong support from many Ontario members.<sup>44</sup> It was obvious that these Eastern Progressives preferred a union with the Liberals and a united reform vote to a division of their ranks and a certain Conservative victory.

Mackenzie King took advantage of this obvious division within the Progressive party and renewed his efforts to form a Liberal-Progressive coalition.<sup>45</sup> This time he received a much more cordial welcome than on previous occasions. Only the Alberta members remained cool to his advances. The action of the 1925 convention, while it had failed to restore unity, at least had made it clear that as far as the U.F.A. was concerned, no federal member could openly seek Liberal endorsement and at the same time expect to receive the support of the U.F.A. organization. Moreover, the Alberta M.P.'s were annoyed at the failure of the Government to implement the Tory report in favour of federal aid for rural credit. The charge was made that it was procrastinating on this issue and seeking to avoid action until after the forthcoming general election. The Liberals were accused of hoping to secure such a majority as would render them independent of the farmer votes and enable the administration to avoid carrying out their promised reforms in regard to rural credit, amendments to the Canada Grain Act, and the equalization of railway rates.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, Feb. 18, 1925.

<sup>43</sup>House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1925, vol. 1, p. 1925; *ibid.*, session 1925, vol. 2, p. 1976.

<sup>44</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, May 13, 1925, pp. 3, 26.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, May 6, 1925, p. 40.

<sup>46</sup>U.F.A., June 1, 1925, p. 7.

The announcement of the general election was the signal for a renewed drive to enlist farmer support for the U.F.A. organization and to send back a solid U.F.A. delegation from rural Alberta, pledged to support a programme of agrarian reforms. In this connection Wood played an important and active role. He attended the various U.F.A. nominating conventions and his speeches did much to rouse enthusiasm among his farmer audiences. He made it clear that the principal issue of the campaign was loyalty to the U.F.A. organization and its principles of group action, and he warned the farmers against compromising their principles for “immediate results.” In group co-operation lay the only way to create the necessary harmony of interest by which the farmers could achieve the same measure of success in the political sphere as they had in the economic through the wheat pool.<sup>47</sup> In a speech at Calgary he supported co-operative political action with labour on a basis of each retaining its own organization and political platform. He rejected any labour-farmer alliance along the lines of the later C.C.F. organization because of the difference in viewpoint of the two movements.<sup>48</sup> Largely because of Wood’s influence all the U.F.A. candidates pledged their allegiance to the Declaration of Principles of 1925. In Alberta the real issue was the people’s attitude towards Wood’s group organization, which he described as “the mobilization of individuals on a basis of permanent industrial interest and the development of intelligent opinion.”<sup>49</sup>

While the daily newspapers of the province were opposed to his ideas, the weekly press generally supported the U.F.A., and throughout rural Alberta the wheat growers once more rallied to its side. In Wetaskiwin, for example, special crews were organized to relieve farmers who were threshing, so that they could go to vote. Although the Progressive movement was badly defeated in the other provinces, in Alberta the farmers remained loyal to their own organization.<sup>50</sup> Every rural seat in the province, except two,

<sup>47</sup>H. W. Wood, “Issues of the Election,” *ibid.*, Oct. 1, 1925.

<sup>48</sup>Manuscript of speech by Wood on relation between the U.F.A. and the Labour movement in the Wood Papers.

<sup>49</sup>U.F.A., Oct. 10, 1925, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup>The final standing was Conservatives 117, Liberals 101, Progressives 23 including 9 from Alberta. *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1925-6, pp. 40-1.

was won by U.F.A. candidates. One of these, Athabaska, was lost only through the use of padded voters' lists and stuffed ballot boxes.<sup>51</sup> It was clear that Wood's ideas still dominated the political scene in Alberta and that the farmers' party was almost as powerful in 1925 as it had been in 1921.

The fact that neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives had a majority in the new House of Commons made the position of the small farmer contingent unusually important. Wood stated that as far as the U.F.A. was concerned, it would be willing to support any government which would sponsor legislation demanded by the farmers.<sup>52</sup> At a private meeting in Calgary attended by Wood and all the successful U.F.A. members except Jelliff, the attitude of the parliamentary group towards the government was decided upon. Robert Gardiner announced that the U.F.A. was going to operate as a parliamentary unit and would not be a member of any political party. It was willing to co-operate with any and all groups including Conservatives, in support of legislation favourable to farmers.<sup>53</sup> The U.F.A. was at last in a position to try out Wood's ideas and to act as a political pressure group. Owing allegiance to no party or to no one except the U.F.A., the group could concentrate on compelling the government to pay attention to their programme or run the risk of defeat. Group action as a method of achieving desirable agrarian political reforms was about to undergo its greatest test.

Despite this declaration, however, the U.F.A. group agreed to join the remnants of the Progressive party, but only on the explicit understanding that it was on a co-operative, not a party, basis. Forke remained as leader but he was assisted by a three-man committee, and H. E. Spencer, of Battle River, Alberta, acted as whip.<sup>54</sup> Because of their numbers and cohesion, the Alberta representatives dominated this agrarian coalition. They told the Liberals and Conservatives that the price of their support was acceptance of the farmers' programme in regard to rural credits, amendments to the Canada Grain Act, tariff reform, return of their natural resources to Alberta, and completion of the Hudson Bay

<sup>51</sup>U.F.A., Aug. 23, 1926, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup>H. W. Wood, "Reflections on the Recent Elections," *ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1925, p. 1.

<sup>53</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Nov. 26, 1925.

<sup>54</sup>U.F.A., Jan. 15, 1926, p. 7.

railway.<sup>55</sup> The Liberals were willing to pay this price, and secured sufficient Progressive votes to enable Mackenzie King to continue as Prime Minister. King's efforts to turn this co-operation into a formal coalition were once more rejected. Gardiner, the U.F.A. leader, made it clear that his group was willing to co-operate with all parties who would support agrarian reforms, but the Alberta members would not unite with one particular political party or enter a political party cabinet.<sup>56</sup> For the first time the Progressives seemed about to accomplish a number of the major reforms wanted by their farmer constituents. Unhappily, the events of the session ended this co-operation before these reforms were achieved. The breakdown of the Alberta natural resources negotiations over Section 17 of the Alberta Act dealing with the position of Separate Schools, the introduction of a rural credits bill with a 7 per cent interest rate, which was felt to be too high, and the discovery of gross negligence and corruption in the Customs Department, all combined to alienate U.F.A. members from support of the Liberal party.<sup>57</sup> Seven of the ten Progressives who supported the Conservative motion of censure on the Liberal government for its administration of the Customs Department were from Alberta—Lucas, Boutillier, Garland, Gardiner, Coote, Kennedy, and Spencer.<sup>58</sup> The confusion created in the Progressive party by the Customs probe, the resignation of Mackenzie King, and the formation of the Meighen government, was illustrated by its division over support of the new administration. At first it passed a resolution to support the new government to enable it to wind up the business of the session and complete the investigation of the Customs Department.<sup>59</sup> However, on a motion by Robb declaring that the government had no right to hold office, most of the Progressives either supported the resolution or did not vote. The government was defeated by one vote and promptly sought and received the dissolution refused to King.<sup>60</sup> The lack of discipline within the Progressive party ranks had once more proved fatal to their cause. Even the U.F.A. members had found themselves

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, March 18, 1926, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 6, 1926.

<sup>57</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 1, 1926, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1925-6, p. 66.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, 1926-7, pp. 28-9.

<sup>60</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, July 15, 1926, p. 1.

divided on the question of party co-operation. All supported Wood's idea that control of the party organization must be exercised by the local constituency associations, but they were not united on how far they were bound to act together as a parliamentary group. Lucas and Boutillier were inclined to support the Conservatives, while Jelliff was as much a Liberal as he was a U.F.A. representative. This lack of unity cost them the enactment of several long-sought bills and showed the urgent need for stricter control by the U.F.A. executive over the actions of the U.F.A. members of Parliament.

To re-establish party discipline and uniformity and to decide the future of the U.F.A. following the manifest break-up of the Progressive party, a meeting of the Alberta representatives, the executive of the U.F.A., and the directors of the federal constituency associations was held in Calgary. Forke had resigned as leader of the Progressives at the close of the session, and in Saskatchewan and Manitoba an open alliance between the Liberals and the Progressives had taken place with the avowed intent of defeating the Conservatives.<sup>61</sup> Outside of Alberta only a few individual candidates still supported an independent farmers' movement, but within Alberta Wood continued to exercise a powerful influence over the course of provincial and federal politics. Although he was not present at the Calgary conference, his shadow hovered over the meeting. Before he sailed for the Orient he had written an article for *The U.F.A.* in which he once more strongly criticized the party system and blamed the failure of the U.F.A. group during the last parliamentary session on their too close co-operation with less well-organized groups. He demanded a return to the principles of group solidarity and warned the constituency associations against nominating any candidate who was not clearly identified as a supporter of the group idea.<sup>62</sup>

At this Calgary conference a sharp controversy took place over the question whether the ultimate authority over the parliamentary members rested with the central executive or with the local constituency associations. Gardiner emphasized the necessity of the U.F.A. forming their own parliamentary group independent

<sup>61</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1926-7, p. 42.

<sup>62</sup>*U.F.A.*, Aug. 2, 1926, p. 1.

of any connection with the Progressives, who he claimed were too closely linked with the Liberals. This group was to be responsible to the central executive of the U.F.A. to whom they would present an annual report. All parliamentary candidates must agree to the Declaration of Principles of 1925 and they must accept the resolutions of the U.F.A. annual convention as their programme. There could be no organic association with any other organization except one established on principles similar to those of the U.F.A. The attempt of Jelliff and of the Camrose constituency association to assert the independence of the district association was defeated at the insistence of Vice-President Scholefield, one of Wood's most loyal supporters.<sup>63</sup> Through these resolutions of the U.F.A. annual convention agreement had at last been reached on the disputed questions of constituency autonomy and the relationship of the federal U.F.A. members and the provincial movement. Wood's philosophy of subordination of political action to the control of the U.F.A. association had prevailed at last. Although he was not present at the conference, his ideas and his supporters had triumphed.

The decisions of this conference were endorsed by the various constituency associations and all the farmer candidates subscribed to the Declaration of 1925 and the programme of the Calgary Conference. At Lethbridge, for example, the U.F.A. delegates sharply reprimanded Jelliff because of his lack of co-operation with the other U.F.A. members. They declared that the M.P. does not represent his constituency exclusively and he must not use his position for personal advantage without regard for the welfare of the whole organization.<sup>64</sup> The significance of this ruling lay in the fact that in the other provinces the Progressive party was breaking up as its leading members one by one returned to the Liberal fold. Outside Alberta the campaign was strictly a two-party contest between the Conservatives and the Liberal-Progressives, and the result was a clear-cut Liberal-Progressive victory. The Conservatives were reduced to 91 seats, the Liberals and their Progressive allies captured 129

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 1926, p. 6.

<sup>64</sup>Report of constituency conventions published in *U.F.A.*, Aug. 16, and Aug. 23, 1926.

seats, and the U.F.A. by increasing their strength to 11 became the third largest party in Parliament. Every rural seat in the province, except Medicine Hat, returned a U.F.A.-chosen candidate.<sup>65</sup>

Wood had achieved his greatest victory. He had succeeded in retaining the support of the Alberta farmers and in convincing them of the superiority of group principles of political action over the party system. Although the farmers' revolt in the other provinces was collapsing in a welter of charges and counter-charges of treachery and double-dealing, and although Forke, the erstwhile Progressive leader, was about to enter the new Liberal cabinet, rural Alberta remained loyal to "the chief" and to his ideas on co-operation and organization. Gardiner, speaking at the banquet tendered Wood on his return from China and Australia, recognized this fact. He declared that there was considerable misgiving among the Alberta members when it was realized that Wood would be absent during the election. However, the success of the farmer candidates showed the extent of the popularity of his philosophy among the farmers.<sup>66</sup> Even though Wood was not there his cause had triumphed.

The connection between the U.F.A. and the political movement was recognized and confirmed at a second Calgary Conference in November, 1926. The independence of the U.F.A. parliamentary group from all political parties was affirmed, and provision was made for an annual meeting of the executive and directors of the U.F.A., representatives of the federal constituency associations, and the U.F.A. members of Parliament. At these conferences the position of the U.F.A. group in the next parliamentary session was to be decided upon.<sup>67</sup> Wood gave this arrangement his blessing in his annual address to the U.F.A. He attributed the success of political action to the spirit of organized co-operation developed by and in the farmers' association. Through the cohesion attained by union the farmers had developed the strength to defeat the opposition of special interests. As long as they remained loyal to the ideal of agrarian co-operation, both the political

<sup>65</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 2, 1926, p. 2; *Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1926-7, p. 47.

<sup>66</sup>*U.F.A.*, Dec. 1, 1926, p. 8.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*, Dec. 1, 1926, p. 4.



and economic aspects of the farmers' movement would survive.<sup>68</sup>

With the close of the 1926 campaign and the successful maintenance by the U.F.A. of their control of federal affairs in the province, Wood virtually retired from federal politics. He had built up an organization whose leaders, using his methods, had just achieved a clear-cut victory. In Gardiner, Garland, Spencer, and Coote the farmers had a quartet of representatives who exerted a much greater influence in the federal Parliament than the size of the U.F.A. delegation warranted. As the spokesmen not only for Alberta but for the farmers' movement as a whole, they were able to force the Liberal administration to accept a considerable number of urgently desired agrarian reforms. The Liberal victory in 1926 had been achieved mainly through an alliance with the Progressives, and the western wing of the Liberal party represented by Dunning, Forke, and Stewart, and the solid Liberal-Progressive bloc of thirty-two Prairie members largely determined government policy. As a result, despite the over-all Liberal majority, the U.F.A. members were able to secure improved credit facilities, a number of amendments to the Canada Grain Act for the benefit of the wheat producers, the setting up of the National Research Council, and changes in political procedure giving formal recognition to the presence of third parties in the House of Commons and their right to move amendments to the budget.<sup>69</sup>

The achievements of this group went far to justify Wood's claim that the only way to secure agrarian reforms was through political action established on a co-operative basis. He had been primarily interested in organization, not in advocacy of particular legislative changes. These he believed would follow inevitably once the proper system of political action had been established. The success of the U.F.A. movement after 1926 was striking evidence of the accuracy of his belief. The ability of the U.F.A. to survive the usual fate of North American agrarian movements and to continue to control both federal and provincial politics in the province was the final proof of the hold that Wood and his philosophy of class unity had gained on rural Alberta. It was

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1927, pp. 10-12.

<sup>69</sup>Pamphlet "Federal Affairs in Review" issued by U.F.A. members of Parliament in 1930.

as the apostle of this method of political action that he achieved his unique place in the agrarian revolt in western Canada. "There was in Alberta a force, a persistence, a continuity of purpose which was lacking in the other provinces."<sup>70</sup>

The general respect and esteem in which Wood was held by all classes of Albertans was reflected in his personal popularity throughout the province. The great work he had done in building up a spirit of unity among the rural population was recognized everywhere. As the bitterness of the post-war period and the Wheat Board struggle declined, all Alberta began to take pride in the accomplishments of their most distinguished resident. Among the farmers his popularity took on the appearance almost of idolatry. He enjoyed a personal ascendancy over them which has been surpassed by no other figure and approached only by one—William Aberhart. The success of the U.F.A. political movement and of the Alberta Wheat Pool was recognized as being due largely to the influence and personality of Wood. When he returned from a trip to the Orient and Australia in 1926, a banquet was given in his honour by the executive of the U.F.A. Three hundred and fifty guests gathered from all parts of the province to pay their respects to "the chief." Although all the speakers recognized the importance of Wood's leadership in the success of the farmers' movement in the province, the dominant note was one of personal friendship and affection.

Premier Brownlee proposed the toast to "our guest" in which he dwelt on Wood's human characteristics. He spoke of his long personal friendship with him, dating back to 1913, of playing rummy with him. "He [Wood] is a poor player, of course. He loses many a nickle [*sic*], and if you could see the smile of satisfaction that comes to his face when he wins a nickle [*sic*], you would see the President in one of his lighter moods." He referred to him as "the great inspiration, the rallying point" for the farmers' movement in the province. Then Brownlee went on to point out Wood's democratic feelings and his deep love for his fellow men. It was Wood's belief that "the people are all right" which was the secret of his influence. He trusted the people and in turn they trusted him since they saw him as one of themselves, always

<sup>70</sup>*Western Producer*, Jan. 29, 1931.

ready and willing to aid them in their problems and sincerely devoted to advancing their interests while relegating his own personal desires to the background.<sup>71</sup>

Recognition of Wood's character and sincerity was not limited to the farmers or even to Alberta. In 1922 Lord Byng, the Governor-General, had invited Wood to call on him.<sup>72</sup> Each found much to admire in the character of the other, and throughout the remainder of Byng's residence in Canada he kept up his contact with the Alberta farm leader. Whenever he visited western Canada he made a point of stopping for a few hours in Calgary for a visit with Wood. When Wood went to England in 1928 he was entertained by a number of the leading English public figures, including Prime Minister Baldwin, who had met Wood while on a visit to Canada in the early 1920's and retained a high regard for him.<sup>73</sup> As the fame of the Wheat Pool movement and of Wood's connection with it spread, interest in his career also grew. In 1926, when he went to China and Japan on business for the pool, the Australian pool leaders insisted that he visit them and aid in the development of a pool organization equal to that in Canada. In an article about him prepared by the Department of Immigration, Ottawa, and published in the *Kansas City (Missouri) Star* he was described as a successful Canadian farmer and an outstanding personality in the pool movement.<sup>74</sup> In a speech to the Wheat Pool delegates at the launching of the second sign-up campaign, R. B. Bennett declared that: "No man or woman in this country who realizes the high ideals of public service, the honesty of purpose, the integrity of character which characterizes H. W. Wood, but will realize how great is the debt we owe to the leader of a great movement."<sup>75</sup>

Wood's role in the development of the farmers' movement in the province was formally recognized in 1929 when the University of Alberta conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*. In the petition for the degree, Dean Howes, of the Faculty of Agriculture, paid tribute to his work in building up

<sup>71</sup>Speech of Premier Brownlee at banquet in honour of H. W. Wood, Nov. 18, 1926, in Wood Papers.

<sup>72</sup>*Calgary Herald*, March 18, 1922.

<sup>73</sup>Interview with George McIvor, Aug. 20, 1948.

<sup>74</sup>*U.F.A.*, Nov. 1, 1926, p. 4.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, June 15, 1927, p. 38.

the farmers' organization in the province. He emphasized his contribution as a leader of the U.F.A. and as a pioneer in the development of co-operative marketing. "Mr. Wood has won from the people he has striven to serve not only confidence and esteem but a love that has fallen to the lot of but few leaders."<sup>76</sup> The Alberta press approved heartily of the recognition paid to him. The *Calgary Herald* referred to his "sane and virile leadership" of the farmers' movement, and the *Edmonton Journal* commented on how "thoroughly well entitled" Wood was to the honour.<sup>77</sup>

Under his direction both the U.F.A. and the Wheat Pool had survived the troubled and difficult years of the post-war agricultural depression to become institutions which exercised a controlling influence over the farmers' political and economic activities. It was Wood's emphasis on co-operation, his refusal to follow the radical ideas of the extremists, and his subordination of his personal fortunes to the welfare of the farmers' movement as a whole which enabled him to retain the trust and confidence of rural Alberta. No matter how much they might disagree with him on details or on specific objectives, all recognized the sincerity of Wood's views. Because they trusted him the majority of the farmers were willing to follow him and to accept his leadership. Because of this confidence in his judgment Wood was, in fact, the real ruler of Alberta, for in the various political and economic difficulties of the middle 1920's his solutions were the ones followed by the farmers. Truly he was the "uncrowned king of Alberta."

<sup>76</sup>Speech of Dean Howes at Convocation when H. W. Wood was awarded his honorary degree, May 15, 1929, in Wood Papers.

<sup>77</sup>*Calgary Herald*, May 15, 1929; *Edmonton Journal*, May 15, 1929.

## THE WHEAT POOL CRISIS

THE SURVIVAL of the agricultural depression of the early 1930's by the Canadian pools was a wonderful recognition of the effectiveness of the work of Wood, McPhail, Brouillette, Burnell, Bredt, and the other leaders of the pool movement. These were years of turmoil and confusion for all agrarian organizations, as agricultural prices reached their lowest level on record. The situation was aggravated by the financial difficulties the pools found themselves in because of their large over-payment on the 1929 wheat crop. In addition, the terrible economic condition of the farmers prompted the revival of demands for some form of regulation of the grain trade. Many felt that the co-operative method had failed and some more compulsory system should replace it. The situation was complicated further by renewed attack on the whole pool idea by the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, which sought to take advantage of the situation to discredit the farmers' marketing organization. The attack failed. One result of the difficulties of these years, however, was the re-organization carried out by John I. McFarland, under which the Central Selling Agency disappeared but the provincial pools survived and flourished. The only major change was that they became primarily wheat handling rather than wheat marketing bodies.

For this result Wood must receive a good deal of the credit. Throughout this period he remained a firm believer in the value of the voluntary method to solve the grain marketing problems. Never in the darkest hours did he abandon his faith in the ultimate survival of the movement. His confidence encouraged the provincial grain growers to remain loyal to the wheat pools. He devoted much of his time to combatting attempts to change the democratic

character of the pool set-up because he was convinced that the best way to solve the farmers' economic problems was through a voluntary co-operative organization controlled by its members. He had no use for any scheme which would change this aspect of the wheat pool movement. Co-operation, not compulsion, was the way to overcome the economic crisis facing the Canadian grain grower.

Holding these views, Wood was at once involved in a bitter conflict with the supporters of the compulsory pool plan advocated by Aaron Sapiro and endorsed by L. C. Brouillette, an important member of the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section, and vice-president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. The origin of this idea lay in the success of the Central Selling Agency in raising prices and reducing costs through its control of 50 to 60 per cent of the wheat crop. By 1927 many farmers, particularly in Saskatchewan, believed that even larger savings could be secured through the creation of a 100 per cent compulsory pool. Sapiro was a leading advocate of this course of action, and he was supported by many members of the Saskatchewan branch of the United Farmers of Canada. The majority of the provincial Wheat Pool delegates were at first little interested in the scheme, but as agricultural conditions worsened in 1928 and 1929 support for Sapiro's plan increased.<sup>1</sup> At the 1929 convention of the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section, a resolution was passed asking "for legislation which would cause all grain produced in the Province to be marketed through the Saskatchewan Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited."<sup>2</sup>

Sapiro gave considerable impetus to this movement in a speech at Melville, Saskatchewan, in September, 1929. He outlined the steps necessary to achieve the 100 per cent pool and the advantages which would accrue to the farmers in return. He pointed out that the Canadian wheat grower controlled 40 per cent of the normal world export surplus. A compulsory pool would enable the farmers to set prices within the limit of the buyers' capacity and the speculator would be eliminated. These would be the results

<sup>1</sup>"So far as the Sapiro plan of making the pool compulsory after we secure 75 or 80 per cent of the crop in this province is concerned, I think the less said about the scheme the better." *McPhail's Diary*, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1928-9, pp. 479-80.

after two-thirds of the farmers had voluntarily joined the pool. No provincial government could withstand the political pressure of an organization representing such a number of farmers. Legislation could easily be secured, therefore, compelling the remaining third to become members of the wheat pool. Not only would the compulsory pool reduce speculation and the artificial forcing down of prices by the grain trade, but it would eliminate the danger that speculators could destroy the pool by paying non-poolers a higher cash price. The contrast between the two prices might very easily weaken agrarian support for the pool method, and Sapiro referred to the non-pooler as an "umbrella man" who enjoyed the benefits of the pool without doing his part to gain them. This compulsory pool was to be managed and controlled by the pool executive exclusively, and neither the provincial government nor the non-poolers aided by legislation would have any representation on it.<sup>3</sup>

Sapiro's plan was opposed very strongly by Wood. Ever since the early days of the pool movement these two leaders had been antagonists. From the outset Wood had opposed the suggestion of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool that Sapiro be given a permanent position within the organization. He was suspicious of Sapiro's loyalty to the co-operative principle and believed that Sapiro's interest in the farmers' movement was primarily to make a profitable living from it. He was particularly doubtful of Sapiro's motive in voluntarily supporting compulsory marketing. "The trouble with Sapiro's advice is that it is free and free advice is usually expensive."<sup>4</sup> At the 1928 convention of the U.F.A. Wood led the fight which resulted in the overwhelming defeat of a resolution endorsing compulsory pooling.<sup>5</sup> In 1929 the Alberta Wheat Pool rejected a similar resolution, and Wood declared that the compulsory pool was unnecessary to the success of the movement.<sup>6</sup>

He disliked the proposal primarily because it was a denial of freedom and an attempt to do by compulsion what could only be achieved through co-operation. If the pools were made compul-

<sup>3</sup>Speech of Sapiro at Melville, Saskatchewan, prepared by G. J. Johnson, 1818 Scarth St., Regina, Saskatchewan, pp. 1-22.

<sup>4</sup>Interview with George McIvor, Aug. 20, 1948.

<sup>5</sup>*Grain Growers' Guide*, Feb. 1, 1928, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>U.F.A., Oct. 1, 1929, p. 13.

ory there would be danger of political manipulation and unsound expansion in production because of artificially high prices. Moreover, if the pool attempted to force up prices through holding wheat off the market the only result would be to create an unmanageable carry-over and the stimulation of production in other parts of the world. The Wheat Pool was a marketing agency, not a holding body.<sup>7</sup> He pointed out that if the government were to compel delivery to one instrument it would almost certainly demand at least a share in the management of this organization. Moreover, who was going to indemnify the grain trade for their property losses arising out of the creation of this single marketing agency? Sapiro's plan was economically and politically "unthinkable."<sup>8</sup>

The bitterness and effectiveness of Wood's opposition provoked an equally sharp reply from Sapiro. He denounced Wood as an early opponent of the Wheat Pool who had to be "kicked into fatherhood of the Pool." He declared that in the beginning of the movement Wood's role had been largely a passive one and the real work was done principally by men like J. H. Woods, of the *Calgary Herald*, Premier Brownlee, and ex-Premier Greenfield. "Every important step that has been taken in the formation of the Wheat Pool and its development has first been opposed by Henry Wise Wood,"<sup>9</sup> he charged in one of his speeches.

Wood flatly denied this. He declared that he was willing to leave the question of the extent of his support of the pool up to the farmers of Alberta. Sapiro was an able propagandist but a poor business man, as the history of the pool movement in the United States well exemplified—"Who can tell how great a blessing it has been that Mr. Sapiro had nothing to do with the conduct of the Canadian Wheat Pool."<sup>10</sup> Wood returned again to this question in his annual address to the U.F.A. at their 1930 convention. He called the proposed 100 per cent pool a "puddle" not a "pool" and claimed that to make the organization compulsory was to hand it over to its enemies when the present contracts

<sup>7</sup>H. W. Wood, "Compulsory Pooling of Wheat and Over-Production," in Wood Papers.

<sup>8</sup>U.F.A., Oct. 1, 1929, pp. 10, 17.

<sup>9</sup>Sapiro's Speech, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-42.

<sup>10</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Sept. 27, 1929.



expired in 1933. Since foreign competition was the primary cause of the existing low prices a compulsory pool was not likely to increase them.<sup>11</sup>

As long as Wood remained president of the U.F.A. he was able to prevent any official recognition of Sapiro's plan, but as soon as he retired in 1931 the association adopted a resolution in favour of a compulsory pool.<sup>12</sup> Within the Alberta Wheat Pool the idea of a 100 per cent pool gathered strength as the position of the farmers worsened. McPhail noted that in March, 1931, four members of the Alberta board were in favour of compulsion, but that Wood was still opposed.<sup>13</sup> Despite the strength of the advocates of the 100 per cent pool, Wood was able to control the situation and to block their efforts to secure legislation in Alberta similar to that in Saskatchewan. When the U.F.A. disregarded his advice in 1931, he visited Edmonton with the object (according to rumour) of convincing Brownlee of the wisdom of ignoring the resolution.<sup>14</sup> The question was finally settled when the Supreme Court of Saskatchewan held that the Grain Marketing Act of the Saskatchewan government to establish a compulsory pool, subject to ratification in a province-wide referendum, was unconstitutional.<sup>15</sup> Wood's campaign against the use of legal force to compel support of the Wheat Pool, the greatest co-operative achievement of the 1920's, had ended in victory. Once more he had shown that principles were more important to him than popularity and that he preferred to rely on voluntary co-operation rather than legislation to solve the farmers' problems. On the other hand the strength and persistence of the agitation for this compulsory pool was an important factor in the high initial price on the 1929 crop. The executive of the Central Selling Agency were afraid that without this high payment the support for the 100 per cent pool would destroy the old co-operative pool system.

Another important issue at this time was the attempt to make the Board of Grain Commissioners a more efficient instrument for the policing of the grain trade. Wood was inevitably involved

<sup>11</sup>U.F.A., Feb. 1, 1930, pp. 12-15.

<sup>12</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1930-1, p. 279.

<sup>13</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, p. 238.

<sup>14</sup>Clipping from the *Alberta Mercury*, Feb. 20, 1931, in Wood Papers.

<sup>15</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1930-1, p. 255.

and he used his influence to prevent the farmers from advancing a purely selfish solution to the problem since he recognized that it was in their own best interests to support a middle-of-the-road policy. At the 1929 U.F.A. convention, he waged a stern fight with Carl Axelson over the composition of a proposed new board. Axelson and the "left wing" succeeded in getting endorsement of an amendment to a resolution by the Board of Directors that the number of members on the Board of Grain Commissioners be increased to five and that meetings be held in the West during the harvest season to investigate and enforce the Board's orders. This amendment provided that of the five members three should represent the pool farmers and two the non-pool farmers. Wood intervened the next day to secure the voiding of this amendment on the ground that it would seriously impair the farmers' campaign. At his request and over the protest of Axelson the offending amendment was repealed.<sup>16</sup>

Agrarian anger at the Board of Grain Commissioners had been stirred up by its acceptance of the so-called "hybrid ticket." This was a new form of grain ticket prepared by Herbert J. Symington, the legal representative of the grain trade, the adoption of which had the effect of ending the farmer's right to designate the terminal elevator to which his grain should be sent. Commissioner Robinson's attempt to justify the Board's action on the ground that it was always willing to rectify any abuses failed to mollify the farmer delegates. Wood pointed out that the original purpose of the Board was to protect the producers against the organized grain trade. He claimed that the present Board was not fulfilling this task but instead was hampering the operation of the producers' organization—the Wheat Pool. At his request the delegates adopted a resolution demanding a new, independent Commission.<sup>17</sup> This was the forerunner of a concerted drive by the U.F.A. and other farmer members of Parliament to secure a thorough overhauling of the whole machinery of government regulation of the grain trade. Gardiner criticized the change in the wording of the grain storage ticket to read "received into store, on account of the Alberta Wheat Producers Limited" as a deliberate attempt

<sup>16</sup>*Country Guide*, Feb. 1, 1929, pp. 58-9.

<sup>17</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1929, pp. 13-16.

to destroy the farmer's right to designate his terminal elevator as provided for under the Campbell amendment.<sup>18</sup> Throughout the session the conflict between the farmers and the organized grain trade continued. Wood supported the stand of the farmer M.P.'s and told the Royal Saskatchewan Grain Commission that the chief complaint of the farmers was the administration of the Canada Grain Act by the present Commissioners.<sup>19</sup> As a result of an investigation of the whole situation by the Agricultural Committee of the House of Commons a number of amendments to the Canada Grain Act were secured. These included a clear definition of the farmer's right to select his own terminal elevator, an increase in the powers of the Board in regard to fixing grades and assessing loss or damage, a new definition of Red Spring Wheat standards, and the appointment of four assistant commissioners to assist the three commissioners.<sup>20</sup> The enactment of these reforms was followed shortly afterwards by the resignation of the old Board and the appointment of three new members. The importance of the Wheat Pools in securing these amendments was recognized with the selection of E. B. Ramsay, general manager of the Central Selling Agency, as chairman of the new Board of Grain Commissioners.<sup>21</sup>

This settled another dispute between the grain trade and the wheat pools largely in favour of the latter. The importance of this victory lay in the unity it displayed among those, like Wood and McPhail, who regarded the pool organization as one of the great achievements of the Canadian grain growers. In his evidence before the Agricultural Committee, McPhail emphasized that he was speaking not as an individual but as the spokesman for all three provincial pools whose officers were unanimously behind the proposals.<sup>22</sup> Wood had strongly supported McPhail and had used his influence among pool members to curb radical proposals which might have weakened the latter's position. Although Wood and McPhail often clashed over matters of policy within the Central Selling Agency, each respected the other and recognized his

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1929, p. 16.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, June 15, 1929, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1928-9, pp. 243-4.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 1929-30, p. 253.

<sup>22</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, p. 297.

sincere devotion to the farmers' cause. There was none of that bitter personal antagonism and suspicion which had characterized the relationship between Wood and Sapiro during the compulsory pool debate. Even during the crisis of 1930 when the whole wheat pool movement was driven back into its original provincial divisions, McPhail and Wood never lost their personal respect for each other's position while at the same time profoundly disagreeing with it.

Most significant in these troubled years, however, was the effect on the wheat pool organization of the great agricultural depression which began in 1929. The success of the pools had resulted partly from the fact that wheat prices were relatively stable or rising during the middle 1920's. The weakness of the initial price technique was that if prices were to fall suddenly, the margin of 15 per cent under the prevailing market price was too narrow to avert serious loss. The custom of keeping reserves small and disbursing all profits at the end of each crop year had left the organization without adequate resources to meet such a crisis. In consequence, when wheat prices fell disastrously following the initial payment, the pool was threatened with bankruptcy from which it was rescued only by the intervention of the provincial and federal governments. During these critical years, Wood continued to share actively in the formation of pool policy. Not only did he use his unrivalled influence among the farmers of western Canada to prevent the adoption of such unwise schemes as compulsory pooling, but he also played a vigorous role during the marketing crisis.

A factor contributing to the wheat marketing problem was the bumper, low grade wheat crop in 1928. This crop was the largest one ever produced in western Canada up to that time; but, because of a severe frost in late August, was of exceptionally low grade. To complicate matters, Argentina had a wheat crop of unusually high quality, which because of the lack of storage space it was forced to throw on the market as soon as harvested. This flooding of world markets led to a serious decline in prices; and the pool decided that in order to maintain its function of orderly marketing it should reduce its sales until the glut disappeared and prices returned to more reasonable levels. This resulted in an

unusually heavy winter carry-over and increased the problem of marketing in the spring. But the wisdom of this policy seemed justified when the pool was able to dispose of all but 48,000,000 bushels and to add to the initial payment of 85 cents a bushel No. 1 Northern, a further 33½ cents a bushel.<sup>23</sup>

There were, however, serious flaws in this apparently rosy picture. The action of the pool in retarding sales until demand and prices improved, was used by enemies as propaganda to antagonize European buyers, particularly British grain merchants and milling interests.<sup>24</sup> Despite the success of the pool in disposing of much of its wheat, it was still left with a record carry-over at the close of the 1928-9 crop year. On the other hand, unfavourable climatic conditions in Canada had greatly reduced the size of the 1929 crop, while considerably improving its quality. The Canadian Wheat Pool confidently set an initial price of \$1.00 a bushel for the 1929-30 crop.<sup>25</sup>

Unfortunately, sufficient allowance had not been made for the large world surplus which piled up when available markets were reduced through tariff legislation, and the effect of the unforeseen stock market crash, in October, 1929. Wheat prices, which in August were averaging around \$1.73 a bushel at Winnipeg, fell disastrously in the fall. Both the pools and the private grain trade interests regarded the decline as temporary and expected British and foreign buyers to resume their purchase of Canadian wheat.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, they continued to limit the amount of wheat they threw on the market, in the belief that after the Argentine and Australian crops were disposed of, foreign buyers would offer reasonable prices for Canadian supplies.

As wheat prices declined, the Canadian Bankers' Association, which had financed the 1929 initial payment and the handling of the 1928 carry-over, became alarmed. Their nervousness increased as the world prices remained several cents lower than the Winnipeg price and Canadian wheat continued to pile up in the country and terminal elevators. Even when the pool offered to sell at

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 179-195.

<sup>24</sup>*Calgary Herald*, May 15, 1929.

<sup>25</sup>H. S. Patton, "Canadian Wheat Pools in Prosperity and Depression," *Essays in Honor of T. N. Carver* (Cambridge, Mass., 1935), reprinted by the Canadian Wheat Pools, p. 9.

<sup>26</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, pp. 199-202.

prices ranging from  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent to 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  cents below the closing Winnipeg price, it found few buyers.<sup>27</sup> British grain merchants (whose resentment against the pools for withholding sales in hopes of stronger demand and, more particularly, for by-passing them by direct sales to millers, had been intensified by the coaching of grain trade in Canada) saw this crisis as an opportunity to join with the grain trade to smash the pools. Throughout the autumn and winter of 1929-30 they waged a strong propaganda campaign against the Central Selling Agency. It was accused of "trying to obtain unduly high prices from wheat importing countries; refusing to sell to Great Britain when an alleged offer was made by Hon. J. H. Thomas, member of the British Cabinet, for a large volume of wheat; antagonizing European nations so that they, in self-defence, increased their wheat acreages; antagonizing the grain trade of the world so that wheat prices were beaten down in retaliation; holding too large a percentage of the Canadian carry-over; and so on."<sup>28</sup>

The position of the pools was further weakened because of the unforeseen reduction of over 300 million bushels in world wheat consumption. This meant that the expected bull market for Canadian grain, after the exhaustion of other sources, never materialized.<sup>29</sup> By February, 1930, May wheat prices were threatening to fall below the \$1.15 per bushel level required to protect the initial pool payment. There was danger that the banks would exercise their option and force the pools to sell their grain on this falling market. At a meeting of the three provincial premiers at Regina, it was decided to guarantee the banks against loss on their advances to pay the \$1.00 a bushel initial payment.<sup>30</sup> This action temporarily saved the pools, but it meant that they were no longer free agents. For example, the Alberta Wheat Guarantee bill, whose objective was declared to be concerned only with the orderly marketing of the 1929 crop, contained a provision requiring the consent of the provincial government before any future purchases

<sup>27</sup>P. F. Bredt, *Canadian Wheat Pools: Historical Review* (1937), Submission of the Canadian Wheat Pool Organization to the Royal Grain Inquiry Commission, pp. 19-20.

<sup>28</sup>L. D. Nesbitt, *The Story of Wheat* (Calgary, 1949), p. 36.

<sup>29</sup>Bredt, *Canadian Wheat Pools*, p. 20.

<sup>30</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Feb. 24, 1930.

could be made by the Alberta Wheat Pool.<sup>31</sup> This was only the first step. Prices continued to sag and the pools were faced with the problem of finding the money to finance their 1930 initial payment. Once more the provincial governments came to the rescue and after prolonged negotiations among pool officials, the provincial premiers, and the bankers, it was announced that the initial payment on the 1930 crop would be 60 cents a bushel, basis No. 1 Northern. Even this price proved too high, and on October 15 it was lowered to 55 cents and on November 11 to 50 cents.<sup>32</sup> In the face of these low prices it proved impossible to maintain the pool marketing organization or to save the whole system from bankruptcy, except through the intervention of the federal government.

Throughout this period of crisis Wood never lost confidence in the ultimate success of the co-operative marketing method. While he admitted that the 1929 initial payment was too high, he defended the general policy of the pool executive as one designed to promote the best interests of the farmers. He explained that the holding of wheat off the market was due to Argentine competition and to a fear that prices would fall even lower if the Canadian crop had been forced on it. He admitted that conditions were serious, but he called on the pool membership to remain loyal and to reject the suggestion of non-pool farmers that they ought to break their contracts and sell on the open market. It was "the testing time of the soundness and nerve of the pool membership."<sup>33</sup> *McPhail's Diary* for these years makes clear that Wood was consulted on all major policy decisions. The course that McPhail followed was endorsed by all members of the Central Board. He was carrying it out in his dual capacity as president and acting general manager. Wood had opposed this dual position when it had first been proposed, but the force of circumstances made it inevitable.<sup>34</sup> Because of this, Wood's role during the crisis was confined principally to maintaining the strength of the organization in Alberta. This service he performed carefully and well.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, March 12, 1930.

<sup>32</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1930-1, pp. 460-1; *McPhail's Diary*, pp. 216-19.

<sup>33</sup>*U.F.A.*, Sept. 2, 1930, pp. 4-5.

<sup>34</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, p. 200.

At the 1930 annual meeting the report of Manager R. D. Purdy showed that 64 per cent of the total wheat acreage of the province was under contract, subject to a considerable reduction arising out of deaths, sales of land, and crop security.<sup>35</sup> Wood's absorption in the development of the Alberta Wheat Pool inevitably weakened his support for the general pool movement. As the financial crisis of 1930 reached its lowest point he came to stress with increasing vigour the importance of reverting to a provincial pool set-up. The climax came in November as a result of the acute financial difficulties growing out of the continued decline in world wheat prices.

This crisis was precipitated by the appearance on the market of large supplies of Russian wheat for the first time in sixteen years.<sup>36</sup> The already tottering wheat prices crashed to the lowest level ever reported, and the pools were faced for a second successive year with the problem of how to finance an initial payment which was higher than the prevailing market price. In 1929 they had been saved by a provincial guarantee; in 1930 they joined with the provincial government in an appeal for a federal guaranteed price of 70 cents a bushel or the establishment of a wheat stabilization board. Both suggestions were rejected and prolonged negotiations were entered into among the executive of the Central Selling Agency, the provincial premiers, and the Canadian Bankers' Association, with the aim of maintaining the pool organization. Finally the banks agreed not to foreclose and seize pool wheat even though prices had fallen below the 15 per cent margin on which their advances were based. In return the Central Executive was to hand over control of wheat marketing to a general manager acceptable to the banks. This was John I. McFarland, former head of the Alberta Pacific Grain Company, an early supporter of the pool idea and a close personal friend of Prime Minister R. B. Bennett.<sup>37</sup> For the present, at least, direction of the pool movement was to be taken out of the hands of its 140,000 farmer members and placed under that of a general manager, whose author-

<sup>35</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1930-1, p. 280.

<sup>36</sup>*U.F.A.*, Nov. 1, 1930, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1930-1, pp. 460-3; *McPhail's Diary*, pp. 227-30.



ity over the operations of the Central Selling Agency was unlimited.

For the Alberta Wheat Pool the end of the Central Selling Agency as an independent, farmer-controlled organization was accompanied by a strong movement, headed by Wood, in the direction of provincial operation. The independence of the provincial pool was sharply limited owing to its huge debt to the provincial government of \$5,649,000 secured by a first mortgage on all pool assets, including its elevator system.<sup>38</sup> This was the amount owed by the Alberta Wheat Pool as a result of the guarantee to the banks by the provincial government on the 1929 overpayment.<sup>39</sup> While McPhail was still frantically attempting to retain some form of unity among the three provincial organizations, Wood was equally determined to re-establish the provincial units and to look for the survival of the organization through local support.<sup>40</sup> More clearly than McPhail he recognized that the appointment of McFarland was the handwriting on the wall as far as the operation of the three Wheat Pools were concerned. He remained convinced that the voluntary co-operative pool system was the best way, and he was "ready at all times to promote development of that system."<sup>41</sup> But he knew that this was a development which could only come with time—not during the greatest agricultural depression in Canadian history. Therefore, he turned away from promoting inter-provincial co-operation to building up the Alberta Wheat Pool as an instrument which would handle the farmers' wheat efficiently and economically in order that they might receive the highest possible net return. The survival of the Wheat Pools is the proof of the wisdom of Wood's decision.

Under McFarland's management the whole marketing system was overhauled; the system of direct sales was discarded and the overseas offices closed. He reverted to the marketing of pool wheat through the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, and at the same time renewed efforts were made to secure some form of federal assistance, especially the establishment of a national wheat board.

<sup>38</sup>*Edmonton Bulletin*, Feb. 24, 1931.

<sup>39</sup>In 1947 the last instalment of this debt was repaid to the provincial government by the Pool. Nesbitt, *Story of Wheat*, p. 36.

<sup>40</sup>*McPhail's Diary*, pp. 237-40.

<sup>41</sup>Letter to McPhail from H. W. Wood, March 25, 1931; *ibid.*, p. 238.

Wood, at first, had been opposed to any suggestion of a guaranteed wheat price because it would tend to increase production and thus defeat its end.<sup>42</sup> When McPhail and the Saskatchewan Pool began to press for such a board the Alberta Pool refused to have anything to do with it, but after several interviews between Wood and McPhail the former reluctantly agreed to back this plan.<sup>43</sup> The Prime Minister, R. B. Bennett, had already made it clear in a speech at Regina on December 30, 1930, that he recognized the serious plight of the western farmers and the necessity of some form of federal aid. He declared his willingness to use government funds to develop mixed farming, provide direct relief where needed, and back up with federal guarantee the provincial governments' support of the wheat pools; but he was opposed to any programme of fixed prices by the Canadian government. It was *ultra vires* and liable to involve the national authorities in unjustified losses.<sup>44</sup> He was equally opposed to McPhail's plan for the re-establishment of a Canadian Wheat Board and, despite the pressure of western premiers and pool officials, he refused to change his mind. He believed that the federal government had neither the right nor the authority to set up such a body.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, in June, 1931, Bennett agreed to McFarland's request for a federal guarantee of the price stabilization operations, including the taking of "hedged" in the open market, which he (McFarland) was forced to pursue. Despite the fears in many quarters that the guarantee would cost the federal government millions of dollars, McFarland eventually achieved a profit of over \$9,600,000.<sup>46</sup>

The failure of the Wheat Board movement was followed by the withdrawal of Alberta from the Central Selling Agency, and the ending of the compulsory contract provisions.<sup>47</sup> The pool concentrated on its elevator business in order to repay its indebtedness to the provincial government. Because of the low amount the pool could offer as an initial price and the farmers' desperate need

<sup>42</sup>U.F.A., Dec. 15, 1930, p. 5.

<sup>43</sup>McPhail's *Diary*, pp. 239-40.

<sup>44</sup>Canadian *Forum*, vol. XI, p. 163.

<sup>45</sup>Canadian *Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1930-1, p. 470.

<sup>46</sup>Nesbitt, *Story of Wheat*, pp. 37-8.

<sup>47</sup>Calgary *Herald*, July 20, 1931; *ibid.*, Aug. 27, 1931.

for cash, Wood and the Alberta directors decided to rely on the loyalty of the farmers to their organization. The contract was suspended and deliveries were placed on a purely voluntary basis. During the 1931-2 season the Alberta Pool Elevators handled approximately 41,600,000 bushels of grain and approximately 48,400,000 bushels in the 1932-3 season. This substantial patronage was an indication of the farmers' loyalty to their own organization.<sup>48</sup> Throughout the early 1930's wheat prices continued low and the provincial pools concentrated on the more efficient handling of the grain growers' crop through their elevator system. In this they were very successful and by 1935 they were once more solvent and rapidly repaying the advances made by the provincial governments. In reviewing the progress achieved since the *débâcle* of 1930 Wood paid a well-deserved tribute to the farmers for their support of the co-operative marketing method. "Through the loyalty of pool members who delivered grain to our elevator system, although released from any contractual obligation to do so, and increased patronage by farmers who were not Pool members, we were able to look after our own financing. Our financial standing is now on such a sound basis that we do not require any guarantee to secure any credit we need on a straight business basis."<sup>49</sup>

For the wheat pools of western Canada the worst was over. The establishment of the Canadian Wheat Board in 1935 closed an era in Canadian agricultural history—a period when the dominant theme had been the struggle for control of wheat marketing between the organized farmers and the organized grain trade. In this conflict Wood had been one of the most prominent and influential figures. He had instilled in the farmers a belief in the value of economic co-operation which had enabled their economic organizations to survive the greatest agricultural depression in history. The extent of Wood's accomplishment can be better understood when the success of the wheat pool movement is compared with the previous record of universal failure for agrarian economic enterprises during periods of depression. This result was not exclu-

<sup>48</sup>Bredt, *Canadian Wheat Pools*, p. 10.

<sup>49</sup>Radio address of H. W. Wood, "The Wheat Pools' Responsibilities," Oct. 31, 1934, in the Wood Papers.

sively due to Wood's influence—men like McPhail and Brouillette share this honour with him. It was Wood, however, who had been largely responsible for the recruiting of the personnel which ran the Alberta Wheat Pool so ably during these years. Under his leadership the farmers of the province had built up a co-operative organization which, for efficiency of operation combined with democratic control, was second to none. It is a great tribute to Wood's judgment of men that many of the leading officials in the Alberta Wheat Pool and the Canadian Wheat Pools Limited received their early apprenticeship in agricultural co-operation under his direction. Wood's ability to pick able subordinates and to retain their loyalty was one of his best qualities and one of the reasons for his lasting influence on the agrarian movement in western Canada.

## “HAIL TO THE CHIEF”

FOR WOOD 1931 marked the close of his active direction of agrarian affairs in the province. He was now over seventy years of age, and since 1926 his energy had been gradually lessening.<sup>1</sup> He lacked the physical stamina necessary for leadership of the political and economic farmers' movements during the depression of the 1930's. He recognized this himself, and, as the years passed, he withdrew from the position of authority that he had formerly assumed. Politically his place was taken by Brownlee in provincial affairs and Robert Gardiner in federal affairs, but neither attained that personal ascendancy over the farming community that Wood had enjoyed. He continued to act as president of the Wheat Pool until 1937 and as unofficial consultant until his death four years later. But as a result of the serious financial condition of the Wheat Pool organization, control over its policies had largely passed from the hands of the farmers. During the middle 1930's, the direction of its operations lay in the hands of J. I. McFarland and after 1935 it came under the operation of the Canadian Wheat Board. The work of the Pool Directors was confined largely to the efficient administration of the provincial elevator system. As a result, Wood's work as president was much less important and less onerous than it had been earlier, when the pool was a wheat marketing, as well as a wheat handling, agency. For this reason 1931 can be considered to mark the close of Wood's career as an influential leader of the Canadian agrarian movement and as the spokesman of the organized farmers of Alberta.

Wood's continuing popularity among the farmers of the province and the U.F.A. members in particular was strikingly demon-

<sup>1</sup>Interview with Rex Wood, Aug. 12, 1948.

strated at the 1930 convention. In recognition of his services during his long tenure as president of the organization, a special meeting was held in the Calgary War Memorial Hall where he was presented with a gold watch and chain, a pocket-book, and a bond of substantial amount. Mrs. Wood was also honoured with the gift of a radio, to console her during the absences of her husband. The warmth of the applause when Wood appeared showed the deep regard which the farmers of the province felt for him.<sup>2</sup>

At this same convention, Wood's cautious attitude towards new ideas involved him, once again, in a battle with the perpetual rebel, Carl Axelson. The latter made a strong attack on Wood's record on wheat pool developments. He accused him of opposing not only the compulsory pool but nearly every other advance made by the Alberta Wheat Pool, notably the decision to enter the country elevator business. Wood was ably defended by E. J. Garland and Vice-President Scholefield. The latter read a letter of January 11 from the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section, which declared that Wood "has been wholeheartedly working for the good of the farmers of the west." Axelson's criticisms were effectively answered when Wood for the fifteenth time was elected President and defeated Axelson by the overwhelming margin of 457 votes to 35 votes.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the extent of Wood's triumph, there arose considerable criticism of his inactivity and a growing feeling that the organization required younger and more vigorous leadership. The secretary had announced a deficit of over \$4,000 and a membership that barely exceeded 12,000 compared with over 37,000 in 1921. The extent of this decline in number is made more apparent when it is realized that the population of the province had increased by over 100,000. Wood recognized the justification for this feeling when he admitted that his services had been limited and declared that he only continued as president until a suitable successor could be found—one who would be willing to devote all his energies to the rebuilding of the organization.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1930, pp. 9, 26.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 1, 1930, pp. 42-4; *Country Guide*, Feb. 15, 1930, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, Feb. 15, 1930, p. 9.

Although support for the U.F.A. association remained at a relatively low level, the popularity of the U.F.A. as a political movement continued practically undimmed among the farmers. The provincial and federal elections in 1930 proved this beyond dispute. Once more the appeal to the farmers' loyalty to their own representatives was successful, and rural Alberta returned its usual solid agrarian delegation to Edmonton and Ottawa. In the provincial election, the brunt of the campaigning for the U.F.A. cause was borne by Brownlee and it was his leadership and hard work that preserved the political unity of the farmers' party and retained the loyalty of the farmers to their provincial government.<sup>5</sup> Because of the nature of the U.F.A. organization and the growing opposition to the narrow class appeal of the government, there was considerable hope among anti-government circles that the administration would be defeated. The *Calgary Herald* declared editorially that group government was on trial, and called for its defeat.<sup>6</sup> From the efforts made by the agrarian leaders it was apparent that there was considerable dissatisfaction in the province at the course of events; in particular, criticism was levelled at the type of candidates nominated by the local constituency associations.

In Tabor constituency, for example, neither of the proposed U.F.A. candidates was known to a majority of the delegates; the constitution was lost and the local president attempted to recall it from memory; and the meeting was not limited to accredited delegates. The result was the nomination of R. A. McClellan, who was not a U.F.A. man and was chosen largely through the votes of non-farmer delegates.<sup>7</sup> That this incident was not an isolated case was shown by the statement of *The U.F.A.* that non-U.F.A. men were getting control of the movement through reviving extinct locals and using their votes to secure nomination so that they could take advantage of the farmers' growing enthusiasm for political action.<sup>8</sup>

This threat to the position of the U.F.A. aroused Wood to action. He came to Brownlee's assistance and delivered a number

<sup>5</sup>U.F.A., April 1, 1930, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup>*Calgary Herald*, May 30, 1930.

<sup>7</sup>U.F.A., August 1, 1930, pp. 21-2. Letter of Mrs. A. C. Patterson of Tabor.

<sup>8</sup>U.F.A., June 2, 1930, pp. 12-13.

of speeches throughout the rural sections of the province in aid of the provincial government. He pointed out that it was the farmers' duty to support their own candidates even when they felt that the choice was a poor one. The remedy for this was not to return to the bondage of the old party system but to take a more active interest in local affairs and see that good candidates were selected.<sup>9</sup> The efforts of Brownlee, Wood, and the other agrarian leaders were once more crowned with success. Though the popular vote for U.F.A. candidates declined, their representation remained practically unchanged because of the loyalty of the farmers. In the new Legislative Assembly of sixty-three members, there were forty U.F.A. supporters. All of the provincial Cabinet ministers were re-elected and the province was assured of five more years of agrarian government.<sup>10</sup>

The triumph of the U.F.A. in June was followed by an almost equally sweeping victory in the province in July in the federal election. In this campaign the Conservatives were led by R. B. Bennett, a one-time provincial Conservative leader in Alberta and long an outstanding figure in the province. They had high hopes of making inroads into the solid U.F.A. delegation because of the grain growers' dissatisfaction with the Liberal fiscal programme and the support of the pool movement by western Conservatives. The latter had strongly supported the efforts of the grain growers to secure changes in the Canada Grain Act which would work for the benefit of the pool farmers, in particular the end of the so-called "hybrid" grain storage ticket.<sup>11</sup> The *Mail and Empire*, a leading Conservative organ, accused the western Liberal members of Parliament of seeking to whitewash the government and of attempting to place on the shoulders of the Wheat Pool the responsibility for the failure of the Board of Grain Commissioners to protect the farmers' interests.<sup>12</sup> The charge was vigorously denied by Gardiner of the U.F.A., but relations between the U.F.A. members and the government were greatly strained by the financial policy of Charles Dunning, the new Minister of Finance. The Liberal

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, June 16, 1930, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1929-30, pp. 502-4; *Calgary Herald*, June 20, 1930.

<sup>11</sup>*Supra*, pp. 217-18.

<sup>12</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1928-9, p. 244.



budget of 1929 not only included an increase in the iron and steel tariff but also contained a clause requiring that 50 per cent of the materials used in all goods imported under the Imperial Preferential Tariff must come from Empire countries. This had the effect of largely nullifying the advantage of this rate to British producers and Canadian consumers.<sup>13</sup>

The widespread anger in the western provinces at this Liberal programme led many Conservatives to look for sweeping gains in the approaching general election. As far as Alberta was concerned these expectations were never realized. The farmers retained their enthusiasm for group action and refused to consider any alliance with the old parties. At the Lethbridge convention, Jelliff, the sitting U.F.A. member of Parliament, was refused a renomination because of his support of the Dunning budget and the fact that he was not a member of either the farmers' association or the Wheat Pool.<sup>14</sup> At the Bow River convention, E. J. Garland was renominated with Wood's endorsement despite an attack on him because he was a Roman Catholic. Wood declared that the task of the convention was to choose the best man regardless of religion, and he called on the farmers to remain loyal to their organization and to reject any attempts to introduce false ideals or religious prejudice into the movement.<sup>15</sup> When the voting was over, Wood's stand was upheld. The U.F.A. once more swept rural Alberta, electing nine out of eleven candidates. Their losses in Athabaska and Lethbridge were due to local conditions—in the one case the running of a third so-called Progressive candidate, and in the other the weakness of the constituency organization because of personal quarrels.<sup>16</sup>

The success of the U.F.A. when farmer candidates in other provinces were being badly beaten, was attributed to the effective political organization of the Alberta farmers. At a time when such well-known agrarian leaders as Drury in Ontario, Crerar in Manitoba, and Dunning in Saskatchewan were unable to win election to the House of Commons, the U.F.A. members continued

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 1929-30, p. 42.

<sup>14</sup>U.F.A., July 15, 1930, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, July 2, 1930, pp. 42-3.

<sup>16</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, 1929-30, p. 640; U.F.A., Aug. 1, 1930, p. 3.

to dominate the political scene in Alberta. Credit for this achievement was given to Wood. His system of class organization had kept the farmers' movement in the province free from any alliance with the Liberal party and consequently it did not share in the *Liberale débâcle* in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.<sup>17</sup> As a result the U.F.A. emerged from the election as the only organized group prepared to uphold the farmers' cause. On the other hand, the magnitude of the over-all Conservative victory meant that for the first time since 1921 the party in office would have a majority large enough to remove its dependence on small third party groups.<sup>18</sup> Inevitably, therefore, the influence of the U.F.A. group in the new House of Commons was less than during the 1920's, when party divisions were much closer.

These electoral victories were to be the last for Wood. In both campaigns his role had been minor, since the grave economic crisis through which the Wheat Pool was passing at this time absorbed too much of his time and energy. Despite Wood's efforts, friction between the two farmer organizations was increasing and at the 1930 U.F.A. convention a resolution had been passed against the establishment of Wheat Pool locals at points where a U.F.A. local was already established.<sup>19</sup> This feeling had been increased by the strong criticism of the editorship of *The U.F.A.* made by the Wheat Pool Board, with the demand that it be changed or the pool would withdraw financial support.<sup>20</sup> As president of both organizations, Wood was in a difficult position. At the 1931 annual convention he made a strong plea for the continued unity of the farmers' movement, but the temper of the organization was hostile. Over the protest of a number of delegates that it violated the principle of co-operation, a resolution was adopted in favour of the 100 per cent compulsory pool as the only way to prevent wheat "bootlegging" by pool farmers. At Bevington's suggestion a resolution in favour of currency inflation was also approved.<sup>21</sup> The serious financial state of rural Alberta had generated a radi-

<sup>17</sup>*U.F.A.*, Aug. 15, 1930, p. 6.

<sup>18</sup>*Calgary Herald*, July 31, 1930. The final standing was Conservatives, 136; Liberals, 89; U.F.A., 9; U.F.O., 1; Progressives, 2; Liberal Progressives, 3; Labour, 3; Independents, 2.

<sup>19</sup>*U.F.A.*, Feb. 1, 1930, p. 6.

<sup>20</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 21, 1931.

<sup>21</sup>*Country Guide*, Feb., 1931, p. 19.

cal spirit which was alien to Wood's conservative outlook, and he was forced to witness the adoption of policies which he had successfully opposed for many years. He recognized the changed temper of the convention, and when Robert Gardiner was nominated as president, Wood refused to contest the position with him. "I have been only nominal president for seven years," he told the delegates as he announced his retirement.<sup>22</sup>

Wood's leadership of the U.F.A. was over at last. For fifteen years he had acted as the spokesman of the farmers of the province. Now this position was to be filled by a new figure, one who had achieved his training and reputation as a political leader rather than as an agrarian philosopher. Political considerations were to dominate the U.F.A. more and more, and the independent class movement, begun by Wood, was to be joined to a new, radical, farmer-labour party—the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.<sup>23</sup> Although this organization claimed to combine "constituency autonomy with group solidarity, local initiative with central direction," it resembled much more closely the Progressive party than the economic class movement sponsored by Wood.<sup>24</sup> His ideas, however, continued to influence provincial politics and to find their renewed expression in the Social Credit movement. The *Albertan* declared that the defeat of the U.F.A. in 1935 did not represent a repudiation of Wood's ideas, but their continuance under a new label.<sup>25</sup>

Wood's last years were, perhaps, the happiest in his life. After 1931 his active career was over and he devoted his talents to acting as advisor and official spokesman for policies which he was not primarily responsible for carrying out. His services to the cause of agrarian unity and co-operation were receiving increasing recognition. A signal honour was conferred on him when he received the Cross of St. Michael and St. George from King George V in the New Year's Honours List of 1935. This tribute was the work of his fellow-Calgarian, R. B. Bennett. Bennett wrote ex-Premier Greenfield that he was pleased to recommend Wood for this award and that his only regret was that he could not per-

<sup>22</sup>*Calgary Herald*, Jan. 21, 1931.

<sup>23</sup>*Canadian Forum*, 1931-2, XII, p. 445.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, XII, p. 446.

<sup>25</sup>*Albertan*, Aug. 24, 1935.

suade him (Wood) to accept a knighthood.<sup>26</sup> Wood felt highly honoured at the decoration, which he regarded as an appreciation of his work in promoting the development of a spirit of co-operation among the farmers. "I have been given credit for making some contribution to that end. I think this is the highest tribute that can be paid to mortal man, and I accept it on that basis."<sup>27</sup>

Financially he was somewhat better off than he had been since coming to Alberta. When he retired from the Wheat Pool in 1937 he received a pension of \$2,500, and with characteristic humour he remarked that now he couldn't afford to die. In addition to this, he made a very lucrative investment in oil stocks on the advice of E. W. Kolb of Calgary. With the profits from the sale of these securities he was able to pay off the heavy \$14,000 mortgage on the family farm.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, he re-invested much of his profits in the stocks, but this time they were on the way down rather than up. He lost most of his earlier gains and emerged from his financial adventure in practically the same position as when he began.<sup>29</sup> During these years he spent his time between the farm at Carstairs and the Wheat Pool Office at Calgary where his tall, spare figure remained a familiar sight. After his wife died in 1939 he found consolation chiefly in the Bible, and in 1940 he told Nesbitt that he "never had more respect for Jesus than I now have."<sup>30</sup> Wood was now over eighty years of age and his health was rapidly deteriorating. When he was still living in Missouri he had suffered an acute attack of Bright's disease which had left him with permanently weakened kidneys. As he grew older this condition worsened. He spent several weeks in a hospital in 1936, and late in May, 1941, he was back there again. His strength rapidly failed, and it proved impossible to clear up the stoppage in the kidneys. On June 10, 1941, he died.<sup>31</sup>

Wood's death brought to a close the career of one of the most interesting and colourful figures in Canadian agrarian history. Under the spell of the personality and ideas of this tall, angular

<sup>26</sup>Letter of R. B. Bennett to Herbert Greenfield, Jan. 7, 1935, in Wood Papers.

<sup>27</sup>Letter of Wood to W. A. MacLeod, Jan. 4, 1935, in Wood Papers.

<sup>28</sup>Interviews with L. D. Nesbitt, July 16, 1948; with John O. Wood, July 18, 1948.

<sup>29</sup>Letter to the author from John O. Wood, June 30, 1949.

<sup>30</sup>Interview with L. D. Nesbitt, July 16, 1948.

<sup>31</sup>*Western Farm Leader*, June 20, 1941, p. 1.

Missouri farmer, a political and economic organization had been created which dominated the province of Alberta for fifteen years and still makes its influence felt there. His philosophy of co-operation enabled the grain growers to work together more effectively than in any other Prairie province. The farmers' movement developed a unity and cohesiveness which gave it a political and economic power unknown among the agrarian associations elsewhere in North America. The history of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association and of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool is replete with accounts of the bitter rivalries among the various leaders. Wood was successful in preventing similar feuds from weakening the movement in Alberta. His authority was so great, because of the farmers' affection for him, that none could hope to challenge his leadership. In the history of Alberta, Wood's career was as important as that of Mowat in Ontario or Howe in Nova Scotia.

The magnitude of his achievement can be better appreciated when it is realized that he enjoyed authority while maintaining and even strengthening the democratic aspects of the farmers' movement. Wood was not a dictator in the usual sense. His power came from his ability to persuade the grain growers to follow the path which he outlined to them. His philosophy of group organization and his successful union of political and economic activities under the U.F.A. attracted a large following. Moreover, the farmers realized that he was not motivated by any personal ambition and that his stand on any question was based sincerely on his interpretation of the value of the proposal to the farmers. Although Wood was accused of being a "Red," a supporter of Marxism, and a dangerous agrarian radical seeking to overthrow the Canadian system of government, he was in fact a conservative, anxious to keep the farmers together and using his influence to prevent the adoption of radical financial, political, or wheat marketing policies which would alienate the more moderate supporters of the farmers' revolt. Co-operation was not only the key to the organization of a successful agrarian movement but the basis of relations between the farmers and the other groups in the state. Throughout his speeches on group action and co-operative marketing runs the idea of unity among all classes in the community as the most

satisfactory way to solve all agrarian problems. Under his leadership the U.F.A. and the Alberta Wheat Pool pursued cautious and conservative policies which enabled them to retain the support of the majority of the farmers in the province.

Wood took advantage of the post-war discontent with existing conditions to develop an agrarian organization which controlled both the political and economic aspects of the agrarian revolt. From the outset the course of events in Alberta differed considerably from that in the other provinces. Political action was the product of the condition that the western grain powers found themselves in during the war, and its growth was considerably stimulated by the work of the Non-Partisan League. Wood's contribution was to turn this general political unrest into an organized farmers' class movement which controlled political affairs in the province from 1921 to 1935. His influence was equally prominent in the controversy over wheat marketing methods in which he supported the Sapiro contract pool as the most satisfactory solution; and under his leadership Alberta was the first province to establish a Wheat Pool organization. He carefully integrated the political and economic sides of the agrarian movement and, as president of the U.F.A. and the Alberta Wheat Pool, united the two aspects within his own person.

Wood's success in Alberta also had important consequences for the grain growers' campaign as a whole. His ideas on group action were not accepted by farm leaders in the other provinces—which meant that in both the Progressive party and the Canadian Wheat Pool movement the Alberta delegation constituted a separate provincial bloc. In neither the political nor the economic body was it possible to build up a unified organization because, as in so many other Canadian movements, provincial loyalties prevailed over national. This development was not necessarily a fault, however. Politically, it enabled the agrarian revolt in Alberta to survive the break-up of the Progressive party in 1925-6 and, under the leadership of Gardiner and Brownlee, to achieve a number of long-sought reforms. In the Wheat Pool, McPhail's leadership and Wood's generally co-operative attitude allowed the farmers to establish a highly successful national marketing body while retaining provincial organization. When the depression of 1929

brought about the collapse of the Central Selling Agency, it was the provincial set-up of the wheat pools which allowed them to survive.

Wood's contribution to the Canadian agrarian movement was twofold. As a philosopher, his theory of co-operation based on group solidarity made the farmers' organization in Alberta the most democratic and the most effective body in Canada. As a leader of the rural population, Wood was able to exercise an influence over the course of events which had important consequences for Alberta and for the country as a whole. He developed a spirit of unity among the farmers which has enabled them to control provincial affairs in the province ever since. He left the imprint of his personality on both the political and economic aspects of the farmers' movement throughout western Canada and he gave to the agrarian revolt a moral and spiritual character which it otherwise would have lacked. It is Henry Wise Wood, the man, who will be remembered long after his deeds have been forgotten.





# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## PRIMARY MATERIALS

### I Interviews with:

- J. E. Brownlee, former Premier and Attorney-General of Alberta, July 20, 1948.
- R. O. German, Secretary of the Alberta Wheat Pool, Aug. 10, 1948.
- George Hoadley, Minister of Agriculture in Alberta, 1921-35, July 6, 1948.
- J. T. Hull, formerly an editor of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, Aug. 28, 1948.
- George McIvor, Chairman of the Canadian Wheat Board and a former member of the Alberta Wheat Pool, Aug. 20, 1948.
- L. Hutchinson, Director of the Alberta Wheat Pool, Aug. 14, 1948.
- W. A. MacLeod, Publicity Director of the Canadian Wheat Pools, Sept. 4, 1948.
- L. D. Nesbitt, Publicity Director of the Alberta Wheat Pool, July 16, 1948.
- R. D. Purdy, Manager of the Alberta Wheat Pool, Aug. 16, 1948.
- W. Norman Smith, editor of *The U.F.A. and the Western Farm Leader*, July 16, 1948.
- John O. Wood, son of H. W. Wood, July 18, 1948.
- Ray Wood, son of H. W. Wood, Aug. 12, 1948.
- Rex Wood, son of H. W. Wood, Aug. 12, 1948.

### II Correspondence of author with:

- Senator W. A. Buchanan, Feb. 7, 1947.
- R. D. Purdy, Sept. 11, 1948.
- H. E. Spencer, a former U.F.A. member of Parliament, Aug. 9, 1948.
- John O. Wood, Dec. 31, 1948, Jan. 25, 1949, June 30, 1949, Aug. 4, 1949.

## III Unpublished works:

Canadian Council of Agriculture, Minutes, 1916-23.

Henry Wise Wood Papers. Collection of letters, newspaper clippings, reports of speeches and memoranda by H. W. Wood in possession of the Alberta Wheat Pool, Calgary.

## IV Government Documents:

Alberta: *Case for Alberta*, a brief prepared by the Government of Alberta. Edmonton, 1938.

Canada: House of Commons, *Debates*, session 1919 to session 1926.

House of Commons, *Journals*, session 1923, Appendix 3, "Proceedings of the Select Special Committee on Agricultural Conditions." Ottawa, 1923.

Report of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, 1867-1939. 3 vols. Ottawa, 1940.

## V Reports and Proceedings:

Alberta Wheat Pool, *Annual Report*, 1926-9.

First International Pool Conference (Third International Wheat Pool Conference), *Proceedings* (Regina, Saskatchewan, 1928).

International Wheat Pool Conference, *Proceedings* (St. Paul, Minnesota, 1926).

Second International Co-operative Wheat Pool Conference, *Proceedings* (Kansas City, Missouri, 1927).

United Farmers of Alberta, *Annual Report and Yearbook*, 1916, 1921.

## VI Contemporary Articles:

Hull, J. T., "The Story of the Wheat Pool," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 1, 1924, p. 8.

Irwin, W. A., "The Wheat Pools," *Maclean's Magazine*, June 15, July 1, 1929.

"The Non-Partisan League," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 5, 1917, pp. 8, 24.

North, Nicholas, "That Man from Carstairs," *Maclean's Magazine*, Feb. 1, 1922.

Ritchie, T. K., "With the Prairie Farmers," *Nineteenth Century*, April, 1925, pp. 507-10.

- Stevenson, J. A., "The Political Situation in Canada," *Contemporary Review* (London), April, 1926, pp. 455-7.
- "The Agrarian Movement in Canada," *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1920, pp. 96-113.
- Wood, Henry Wise, "The Canadian Council of Agriculture and Political Action," *U.F.A.*, May 15, 1923, p. 9.
- "Can We Afford not to Establish a Wheat Board?" *U.F.A.*, Jan. 15, 1923, p. 4.
- "Democracy in Action," *Grain Growers' Guide*, April 13, 1921, p. 3.
- "Democratic Group Organization," *U.F.A.*, April 15, 1922, pp. 15 ff.
- "The Efficient Citizenship Group," *Grain Growers' Guide*, March 22, 1922, p. 3; *ibid.*, March 29, 1922, p. 3.
- "The Group vs. the Party," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 6, 1922, p. 17.
- "How Wheat Prices were Fixed," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Oct. 3, 1917, pp. 11, 16.
- "In Defense of Group Politics," *Canadian Forum*, Dec. 1922, p. 72.
- "Issues of the Election," *U.F.A.*, Oct. 1, 1925, p. 1.
- "My Religion," *Toronto Star Weekly*, n. d.
- "Organization for Democracy," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 19, 1917, pp. 21 ff.
- "The Organized Farmers and Politics," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Sept. 19, 1917, p. 10.
- "Party System Inadequate," *Western Independent*, Feb. 18, 1920, p. 12; *ibid.*, Feb. 25, 1920, p. 13.
- "Pendulum of the Clock without Hands Makes Another Swing," *U.F.A.*, Nov. 2, 1925, pp. 1, 3.
- "Reflections on the Recent Election," *U.F.A.*, Nov. 2, 1925, p. 1.
- "The Significance of Democratic Group Organization," *U.F.A.*, April 15, 1922, p. 4.
- "Why the Canadian Farmer needs a Wheat Board," *U.F.A.*, June 15, 1922, p. 4.
- "Why the U.F.A. is in Politics," *Grain Growers' Guide*, Nov. 5, 1919, pp. 16-18.
- "Compulsory Pooling of Wheat and Over-Production," *Wood Papers*.

## VII Newspapers and Periodicals:

- Albertan* (Calgary, Alberta), 1917-25 and miscellaneous references, 1931-5.  
*Alberta Non-Partisan* (Calgary, Alberta), 1917-19.  
*Calgary Herald* (Calgary, Alberta), 1915-31.  
*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs* (Toronto, Ontario), 1911-32.  
*Canadian Forum* (Toronto, Ontario), 1921-31.  
*Country Guide* (Winnipeg, Manitoba), 1928-31. Successor to *Grain Growers' Guide*.  
*Current History* (New York, New York), 1922-5.  
*Edinburgh Review* (London, England), 1920-5.  
*Edmonton Bulletin* (Edmonton, Alberta), 1916-25.  
*Edmonton Journal* (Edmonton, Alberta), 1919-31.  
*Farmers' Advocate and Home Magazine* (London, Ontario), 1919-20.  
*Free Press* (London, Ontario), June 15, 1941.  
*Grain Growers' Guide* (Winnipeg, Manitoba), 1912-28.  
*Maclean's Magazine* (Toronto, Ontario), 1919-31.  
*Manitoba Free Press* (Winnipeg, Manitoba), 1916-26.  
*Nutcracker* (Calgary, Alberta), Nov., 1916-Sept., 1917.  
*The Progressive* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan), 1924.  
*Queen's Quarterly* (Kingston, Ontario), 1924-31.  
*Review of Reviews, American* (New York, New York), 1919-1924.  
*Round Table* (London, England), 1921-35.  
*The U.F.A.* (Calgary, Alberta), 1922-31.  
*Western Farm Leader* (Calgary, Alberta), 1941.  
*Western Independent* (Calgary, Alberta), 1919-20.  
*Western Producer* (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan), 1925.

## SECONDARY MATERIALS

- Ames, E. S., *The Disciples of Christ* (Chicago, n.d.).  
 Bennett, G., *Farmer and the Wheat Problem* (Winnipeg, 1937).  
 Blue, John, *Alberta, Past and Present* (3 vols., Chicago, 1924).  
 Borden, Henry (ed.), *Robert Laird Borden, His Memoirs* (2 vols., New York, 1938).  
 Bredt, Paul F., *Canadian Wheat Pools: Historical Review*, Submission of the Wheat Pools to the Royal Grain Inquiry Commission, 1937.

- Canadian Council of Agriculture, *The Farmers' Platform* (Winnipeg, 1916).
- "Canadian Wheat Pools on the Air." A series of radio addresses delivered in January, 1935, and March, 1936.
- Clevenger, Homer, "Farmers' Alliance in Missouri," *Missouri Historical Review*, 1944-5, pp. 24-44.
- "Missouri Becomes a Doubtful State," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 1942-3, pp. 541-56.
- "Co-operative Wheat Pools." A pamphlet issued by the Canadian Council of Agriculture, 1921.
- Dafoe, John W., *Clifford Sifton in Relation to his Times* (Toronto, 1931).
- "Federal Affairs in Review." A pamphlet issued by the U.F.A. Members of Parliament, 1930.
- Follett, M. P., *The New State* (New York, 1918).
- Ford, Arthur H. "Some Notes on the Formation of the Union Government in 1917," *Canadian Historical Review*, 1938, pp. 357-64.
- Glazebrook, George P. de T., *History of Transportation in Canada* (Toronto, 1938).
- Hansen, M. L. and Brebner, J. B., *The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples* (Toronto, 1940).
- Innis, Harold A. (ed.), *The Diary of Alexander James McPhail* (Toronto, 1940).
- Irvine, William J., *The Farmer in Politics* (Toronto, 1921).
- Knapp, Joseph G., *The Hard Winter Wheat Pools* (Chicago, 1933).
- McInnis, Edgar, *Canada, a Political and Social History* (Toronto, 1947).
- Mackintosh, W. A., *Agricultural Cooperation in Western Canada* (Toronto, 1924).
- *Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces. Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, vol. IV (Toronto, 1935).
- *Prairie Settlement, the Geographical Setting. Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, vol. I (Toronto, 1934).
- Morton, W. L., "Progressive Movement and Cabinet Domination," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 1946, pp. 136-47.
- "Social Philosophy of Henry Wise Wood, the Canadian Agrarian Leader," *Journal of Agricultural History*, 1948, pp. 114-22.
- "Western Progressive Movement, 1919-21," *Proceedings of the Canadian Historical Association*, 1946, pp. 41-55.
- Nelson, John, *The Canadian Provinces: Their Problems and Policies* (Toronto, 1924).

- Nesbitt, L. D., *The Story of Wheat* (Calgary, 1949).
- Nourse, Edwin G., *American Agriculture and the European Market* (New York, 1924).
- Patton, H. S., "Canadian Wheat Pools in Prosperity and Depression," *Essays in Honour of T. N. Carver*. Cambridge, Mass., 1935. Reprinted by the Canadian Wheat Pools.
- *Grain Growers' Co-operation in Western Canada* (Cambridge, Mass., 1928).
- Porritt, Edward, *The Revolt in Canada against the New Feudalism* (London, 1911).
- Roberts, Leslie, *So This is Ottawa* (Toronto, 1933).
- Saloutos, Theodore, "The Rise of the Nonpartisan League in North Dakota, 1915-17," *Journal of Agricultural History*, 1946, pp. 43-61.
- "Expansion and Decline of the Nonpartisan League," *Journal of Agricultural History*, 1946, pp. 235-52.
- Sharp, Paul F., *The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1948).
- Thomas, L. G., "Liberal Party in Alberta," *Canadian Historical Review*, 1947, pp. 411-27.
- Wood, Louis A., *History of the Farmers' Movement in Canada* (Toronto, 1924).
- Yates, S. W., *The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool* (Saskatoon, Sask., 1947).

# INDEX

ABERHART, WILLIAM, 25

Agrarian movement, 17, 29

Farmers' organizations, 31-4

Agrarian politics: programme of Alberta farmers, 22, 43; Alberta, 26, 32; influence of English liberalism, 30-1; attitude of farmers, 36; role of farmers in 1911 general election, 37-40; "Siege of Ottawa," 38; effect of election of 1911, 40; growth of political action in Alberta, 41, 60; farmers' attitude towards credit, 44; "free wheat" question, 46; farmers enter, 50; influence of Wood, 53; break-up of Liberal party over conscription, 57; federal election of 1917, 58-60; growth of farmers' discontent, 61-2; dislike of cancellation of military exemptions, 69; demand for tariff reform, 71; formation of Progressive party, 75-6; Assiniboia by-election, 76-7; internal struggle in Alberta, 79-81, 85-6; Crerar-Wood clash over political action, 87; importance of U.F.A. convention, 1920, 90-1; control by provincial associations, 92; programme of Alberta farmers, 96; Medicine Hat by-election, 97-9; Alberta provincial election, 1921, 99-101; expansion of agrarian political action, 103; strength of farmer support, 108; weakness of Progressive Party, 114-16; formation of "Ginger Group," 116; "Ginger Group" struggle in Alberta, 118; influence of wheat marketing problem, 121; Alberta's farmer govern-

ment, 176-7; influence of Alberta Wheat Pool, 181; break of Progressive Party, 182; loyalty of Alberta farmers to farmer candidates in 1925, 183-4; Progressive platform, 1925, 184-5; the Liberal-Progressive alliance, 185-6, 189

Alberta: population, 18, 20, 21, 29; agrarian movement, 3, 9, 13, 17, 22, 62; economic problems, 18; agriculture problems, 18; physical features, 18-20, 24, 25; settlement, 21; agriculture, 22, 38; expansion of wheat farming, 23; agricultural prices, 24, 25; problem of farmers' debts, 24; livestock industry, 25; agrarian politics, 26, 52; mining industry, 26-7; transportation, 27-8; American population, 30; farmers in politics, 32, 53; farmers' organization, 32-4; wheat farming, 34; provincial politics, 37, 47, 56, 60; federal election of 1911, 40; attitude of farmers, 46; 1913 provincial election, 47-8; 1917 provincial election, 56; 1917 federal election, 59-60; importance of Wood's philosophy, 66-7; support for political action, 72; reception of farmers' programme, 73; creation of U.F.A. Political League, 80; supremacy of U.F.A. in politics, 81; creation of provincial political action committee, 83; Cochrane by-election, 84-6; growth of agrarian political action, 87; endorsement of Wood's theories of group action, 88-90; significance of U.F.A. convention

- of 1920, 90; character of agrarian political action, 91; economic grievances of farmers, 94-5; decision to support provincial political action, 96; Medicine Hat by-election, 97-9; provincial election, 1921, 99-101; U.F.A. government formed, 102; influence of U.F.A. in federal election of 1921, 106; U.F.A. victory in federal election, 1921, 108; depressed wartime conditions of wheat farmers, 126; influence of Canadian Wheat Board conflict, 138; radical monetary ideas of farmers, 173; power of U.F.A., 175; U.F.A. administration, 176-7; railway problem, 177, 179; relationship of U.F.A. and provincial government, 177-8; premiership crisis, 178-9; provincial election, 1926, 180-1; Brownlee-Wood co-operation, 181; provincial election, 1930, 211-12
- Alberta and Great Waterways, 28
- Alberta Co-operative Elevator Company, 32-4, 52
- Alberta Farmers' Association, 14, 32
- Alberta Hail Insurance Board, 24
- Alberta Non-Partisan, 71, 72, 77, 78, 81
- Alberta Pool Elevators, Ltd., 207
- Alberta Wheat Guarantee bill, 202
- Alberta Wheat Pool, 3, 6, 17, 24, 35, 195, 203, 205 ff., 214, 218; influence of Wood, 140; difficulty of establishing, 141-2; role of Sapiro, 143; sign-up campaign, 144-6; contract, 144-5; Alberta government aid, 145, 147; marketing 1923 wheat crop, 146-8; securing elevator facilities; 147-8; first year's operations successful, 148; marketing policy, 154; membership, 154; criticism of U.F.A. influence, 155; country elevators, 156; failure of elevator agreement, 157-8; build own elevators, 158; second sign-up campaign, 159; support for compulsory pooling, 197; withdrawal from Central Selling Agency, 206
- Albertan, 215
- American agrarian politics, 37, 39: Non-Partisan League in North Dakota, 49
- American farmers' movements, 11, 12, 30
- Argentina, 22
- Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, 61, 76
- Athabaska, Alberta, 184, 213
- Australia, 22
- Australian Pool movement, 166-7
- Axelson, Carl, 175, 198, 210
- BAKER, PERCIVAL, 70, 89
- Baldwin, Stanley, 191
- Bath, T. H., 166
- Bennett, R. B., 14, 40, 108, 191, 204, 206, 212, 215
- Bevington, George, 174, 214: early career, 172 n.
- Board of Grain Commissioners, 41, 54, 199, 212
- Board of Grain Supervisors, 4, 23, 54-5, 68, 120, 122, 197
- Board of Railway Commissioners, 41, 95
- Borden, Sir Robert Laird, 28, 39, 42, 46, 56, 58
- Boutillier, A. M., 185, 186
- Bow River convention, 125, 213
- Bower, James, 32, 37-8, 47
- Bracken, John, 136
- Bredt, P. F., 193
- Brouillette, L. C., 140, 149, 150, 193, 194, 208
- Brownlee, J. E., 6, 101, 102, 141, 145, 150, 152, 171, 172, 177, 179, 181, 196-7, 209, 211, 218
- Buchanan, W. A., 44
- Buckley, J. C., 77
- Burley tobacco growers' pool of Kentucky, 141
- Burnell, C. H., 152, 193



- By-elections, federal: Assiniboia, 76-7; Medicine Hat, 97-9
- By-elections, provincial: Kindersley, 87; Cochrane, 26, 84-6; Grouard, 178
- Byng, Lord, 191
- CALGARY CONFERENCE, July, 1926, 186-7
- Calgary East, 78, 82, 107
- Calgary Herald*, 73, 85, 86, 88, 142, 144, 148, 164, 181, 192, 196, 211
- Calgary West, 15, 78, 82, 107, 108
- California Fruit Growers' Association, 126
- Campbell amendment, 161 ff., 199
- Campbellite Church, 9-10
- Canada Grain Act, 41, 46, 147, 159, 161, 182, 184, 189, 199, 212
- Canadian Bankers' Association, 201, 204
- Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers, Ltd., 151, 159, 168
- Canadian Council of Agriculture, 3, 37, 38, 42, 43, 44, 50, 54, 56, 68, 70, 92, 104, 111, 117, 122, 125, 127, 128, 129, 132, 135, 140, 143, 162, 172, 175: political programme, 36, 72
- Canadian Manufacturers' Association, 39
- Canadian Milling and Grain Journal*, 164
- Canadian Northern Railway, 20, 21, 28, 44
- Canadian Pacific Railway, 16, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29
- Canadian Society of Equity, 13, 30, 31
- Canadian Wheat Board, 4, 111, 206, 207, 209, 214: establishment, 122; selling policy, 124; agrarian criticism, 124; revival of demand for, 130-1; re-establishment, 132-3; limited powers, 133; failure, 134; rejection by Manitoba, 136; significance, 137-8
- Canadian Wheat Pool, 4, 31, 218: advocated by Farmers' Union of Canada, 140; campaign for 1923 abandoned, 142; influence of Wood on establishment, 149; Sapiro's contribution, 150; establishment of provincial pools, 150; creation of Central Selling Agency, 150-2; organization, 153, 159-60; increase in membership, 159; marketing policy, 160; favour Campbell amendment, 161; wheat export tax opposed, 163; prestige and influence, 166; effect of depression on marketing methods, 200; economic difficulties, 201-2; criticized by grain trade, 202; appointment of McFarland as manager, 204
- Carstairs, Alberta, 13, 19, 216
- Carvell, Frank, 95
- Central Canada Railways, 28-9
- Central Selling Agency, 4, 5, 151, 152, 153, 159, 160, 165, 169, 193, 194, 197, 199, 202, 204, 205-6, 219
- China, 156
- Chipman, G. F., 45, 106
- Clark, Michael, 106
- Claresholm, Alberta, 47, 56, 101
- Cochrane by-election, 26, 84-6
- Colquhette, R. D., 126
- Conservative party, 39, 40, 41, 43, 47, 56, 61, 98, 100, 105, 106, 114, 162, 184-6, 212, 214
- Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 215
- Coote, George G., 185, 189
- Crerar, T. A., 34, 37, 55, 58, 61, 75, 87, 90, 92, 97, 102, 104, 105, 106, 107, 110-12, 114, 124, 128, 131, 134, 135, 136, 137-40, 161, 213
- Cross, Charles W., 57, 59-60
- Crow's Nest Pass Agreement, 29, 54
- Culle, James, 178
- Currie, Colonel, 75, 87

- DAFOE, JOHN W., 57  
 Declaration of Principles of 1925, 119, 181, 183  
 Didsbury constituency, 101  
 Drury, E. C., 213  
 Dunham, S. S., 30, 72, 79  
 Dunning, Charles, 128, 134, 136, 137, 189, 212
- Edmonton Bulletin*, 54, 60, 133, 135, 148  
 Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Railways, 21, 28  
*Edmonton Journal*, 142, 144, 148, 192  
 Edwards, George, 149  
 Elections, federal: (1911), 37, 40; (1917), 58-60; (1921), 106-8; (1925), 183-4; (1930), 211-13  
 Elections, provincial, Alberta: (1913), 47-8; (1917), 37, 56; (1921), 99-101; (1926), 179-81; (1930), 211-12  
 Elliott, C. M., 147
- FARMERS' DEBTS, 24-5  
 Farmers' Platform of 1916, 50-1  
 Farmers' Union of Canada, 117, 139, 146, 149, 152, 175  
*Financial Times*, 133  
 Fisher, C. W., 84  
 Fordney Emergency Tariff, 94  
 Forke, Robert, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 184, 186, 188, 189  
 Foster, George, 41, 123, 126  
 Freight rates, 29
- GARDINER, ROBERT, 97, 116, 171, 184-5, 188, 198, 209, 212, 215, 218  
 Gariepy, Wilfrid, 60  
 Garland, E. J., 118, 185-6, 189, 210, 213  
 George, Henry, 30  
 German, R. O., 159  
 "Ginger Group," 116, 119, 182: hostility towards Liberal party, 182
- Glambeck, John, 81  
 Gould, O. R., 61, 76, 124  
 Grain Growers' Grain Company, 14, 33-4, 52, 103  
*Grain Growers' Guide*, 32, 34, 37, 41, 44, 45, 50, 53, 57, 58, 64, 71, 72, 75, 76, 79, 94, 97, 109, 116, 121, 126, 157  
 Grand Trunk Pacific Railways, 28, 44  
 Greenfield, Herbert, 31, 80, 88, 98, 102, 134, 136, 141, 179, 196, 215  
 Griesback, W. A., 40
- HAIGHT, S. E., 49  
 Hall, Uriel S., 12  
 Harris, C. H., 174, 175  
 Haslam, J. H., 140  
 Henders, Robert C., 45, 50, 76  
 Hoadley, George, 100, 102, 141  
 Howe, Joseph, 217  
 Hull, J. T., 106  
 Hutchinson, L., 146  
 Hyndman Commission, 130
- IMMIGRATION into Western Canada, 20, 30  
 Imperial Preferential Tariff, 213  
 Irvine, William M., 50, 68, 80, 81, 82, 107, 182
- JACKMAN, W. J., 142, 146, 174  
 Japan, 156  
 Jelliff, L. H., 116, 182, 184, 213  
 Jensen, C., 146  
 Johnson, Guy, 86, 87  
 Johnson, H. W., 68  
 Johnston, J. F., 182
- KELLNER, D. F., 116, 118, 182  
 Kennedy, John, 186  
 King, William L. Mackenzie, 105, 107, 114, 132, 182, 185  
 Kolb, E. W., 216
- LABOUR PARTY, 108  
 Lambert, Norman, 71, 106, 121  
 Langley, George, 128, 137

- Laurier, Sir Wilfrid, 31, 37, 38, 39, 57  
 Leedy, J. W., 30, 44, 50, 68, 74  
 Lethbridge Convention, 88, 213  
 Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District, 20, 95  
 Liberal Party, 4, 15, 31, 38, 39, 40, 46, 47, 48, 52, 56, 57, 59, 76, 82, 84, 85, 100, 105, 106, 110, 114, 117, 162, 177, 178, 184-6, 189, 212, 214  
 Liberal-Progressive coalition, 182  
 Lucas, W. T., 116, 185, 186
- MACKENZIE, D. G., 103  
 Macleod Convention, 79, 107  
 MacPhail, Agnes, 182  
 Magill, Dr. Robert, 54  
 Maharg, J. A., 71, 105, 110, 149  
*Mail and Empire*, 212  
 Mangles, R. N., 146  
 Manitoba, 18, 19, 20, 25, 33, 46, 50, 83, 90, 106, 107, 114, 136, 146, 149, 150, 169, 214  
*Manitoba Free Press*, 53, 57, 73, 75, 76, 86, 87, 98, 113, 118, 123, 128  
 Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, 45, 76  
 Manson, R. J., 107  
 Marx, Karl, 14, 64  
 McClellan, R. A., 211  
 McFarland, John I., 144, 145, 146, 193, 204-6, 209  
 McFarquhar, C., 86  
 McIvor, George, 161  
 McKenzie, D. D., 76  
 McKenzie, Robert, 38  
 McKinney, Louise C. (Mrs.), 56, 80, 101  
 McLean, A. D., 132  
 McMaster, J. B., 75  
 McMaster, W. D., 75, 132  
 McPhail, Alexander J., 5, 150, 151, 153, 159, 160 ff., 164, 193, 197, 199, 203, 205, 206, 208, 218  
 McPherson, O. L., 83, 88, 89, 146, 181
- Medicine Hat Convention, 78, 97  
 Meighen, Arthur, 43, 98, 105, 107, 133, 162, 185  
 Mill, John Stuart, 62  
 Miner, James, 69  
 Moore, A. A., 84  
 Motherwell, W. R., 76, 132  
 Mowat, Oliver, 217  
 Muir, Archie, 83, 89, 94  
 Musselman, J. R., 87, 103, 137
- NANTON, ALBERTA, 56, 101  
 National Research Council, 189  
 Nesbitt, L. D., 216  
 "New National Policy," 72, 73, 75, 76, 83, 87, 103-4  
 Non-Partisan League, 30, 37, 45, 55, 62, 71, 83, 218: origin, 48-50; Alberta provincial politics, 56; 1917 election, 59; support of political action, 68, 78; effort to combine with U.F.A., 77; attack on U.F.A., 79; collapse of, 81  
 Norris, Frank, 14, 30  
 Northwest Grain Dealers' Association, 158  
*Nutcracker*, 53
- OLIVER, FRANK, 40, 57, 59  
 Ontario, 106  
 Orchard, G. R., 87  
 Owens, R. C., 30, 31
- PALLISER'S TRIANGLE, 20  
 Panama Canal, 155  
 Parker, R. A., 82  
 Parsons, S. R., 70-1  
 Partridge, E. A., 33-4, 130  
 Patrons of Industry, 84  
 Peace River District, 20, 21, 28, 29, 47, 177  
 Plumer, B. S., 146  
 Political Action Committee, 89  
 Prince Rupert, 156  
 Progressive Party, 4, 31, 40, 92, 111, 186, 218: position of Alberta members, 90, 104, 109; Medicine Hat by-election, 97-9; emergence

- of Wood-Crerar conflict, 102-4, 111; pro-Liberal character, 105, 109, 110-11, 113; role in federal election, 1921, 106-8; political weakness, 110-111; resignation of Crerar, 112; growth of Progressive-Liberal alliance, 114-17; secure Wheat Board legislation, 133; support Campbell amendment, 162; alliance with liberals, 185; disappears after 1926 federal election, 188
- Puffer, W. F., 82
- Purdy, R. D., 204
- RAMSAY, E. B., 199
- Reciprocity Agreement of 1911, 51
- Red Deer Convention, 82
- Regina Leader*, 150
- Rice-Jones, C., 31
- Riddell, F. W., 122, 129, 134
- Riley, E. H., 15
- Robb, C., 114, 185
- Robertson, George, 167
- Roddle, A. S., 15
- Rogers, Robert, 43
- Root, Mrs. G. F., 83
- Ross, Alex, 176, 181
- Royal Saskatchewan Grain Commission, 199
- Rutherford, Hon. A. C., 28, 47
- SAPIRO, AARON, 5, 126, 140-3, 155, 194, 196, 200, 218
- Saskatchewan, 18, 19, 20, 25, 36, 37, 46, 50, 83, 90, 103, 107, 114, 125, 134, 146, 150, 169, 214
- Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, 34, 127-8, 129, 134, 137, 139, 149, 150
- Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, 87, 103, 117, 122, 128, 139, 146, 149, 175, 217
- Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, 195, 206, 217
- Saskatoon Conference, 109, 113
- Scholefield, H. E. G. H., 210
- Shaw, J. T., 107
- Shields, W. H., 178
- Sheppard, Rice, 15, 32, 74, 107, 108, 110, 172
- Sifton, Arthur L., 47, 48, 57, 60
- Sifton, Clifford, 39, 57, 59
- Smith, D. L., 147, 161
- Social Credit, 25, 215
- Society of Equity, 30, 31
- South-West Co-operative Wheat Growers' Association, 166
- Speakman, Alfred, 116, 117
- Speakman, James, 15, 182
- Spence, W. D., 78, 83
- Spencer, Herbert, 62, 115, 184, 185, 189
- Spencer, Nelson, 97
- Stevenson, S., 88
- Stewart, Charles, 60, 67, 79, 84, 85, 99, 122, 132, 189
- Stewart, James, 124, 129, 131, 134
- Stewart-Riddell Commission, 129
- Symington, Herbert J., 198
- TABOR CONSTITUENCY, 211
- Territorial Grain Growers' Association, 31
- "The U.F.A.," 113, 141, 147, 178, 186, 211, 214
- Thomas, J. H., 202
- Thompson, J., 84
- Tolmie, S. F., 126
- Toronto *Globe*, 30
- Townley, Arthur C., 49
- Tregillus, W. J., 38
- Trego, W. D., 68, 72
- Turgeon Royal Commission, 161, 163
- Turriff, J. G., 43, 57
- UNION GOVERNMENT, 37, 56-60, 71, 75, 76
- United Farmers of Alberta, 3, 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 30, 32, 33, 35, 40, 41; demand for credit reform, 44; interest in provincial politics, 46-9; 1912 convention, 46; organization, 48; 1917 convention, 52; 1918 convention, 67;

- interest in political action, 62; executive support of cancellation of exemption, 69; quarrel with Non-Partisan League, 71; 1919 convention, 73-4, 83; organization for political action, 74; 1920 convention, 88; acceptance of Wood's theories of group action, 89; political importance of organization, 92-3; growth of membership, 94; 1921 convention, 96; Medicine Hat by-election, 97-9; role in Alberta provincial election, 99-101; importance of group theory of political action, 100; formation of farmer government, 102; opposition to political fusion, 109; 1922 convention, 110; criticism of Progressive-Liberal alliance, 112; support of political action, 117, 119; debate over "Ginger Group," 118; interest in wheat pool, 126; demand for Canadian Wheat Board, 130-1; renewal Wheat Board demand, 135; aids sign-up campaign of Alberta Wheat Pool, 145; support of country elevators, 156-7; endorses Campbell amendment, 162; agrarian discontent, 171; demand for monetary reform, 172; continued support of political action, 174; relations with Brownlee, 179; role in provincial election, 1926, 180-2; support of "Ginger Group," in 1925 federal election, 183; formation of independent political party, 184; hostility towards Liberal party, 185; establishment of independent political organization, 187; formation of independent political party confirmed, 188; criticism of Board of Grain Commissioners, 198; political influence in Alberta, 211-13; influence in House of Commons, 214, 218
- U.F.A. Political Association, 84, 86, 88  
 "U.F.A. Political League," 80  
 United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section, 194, 210  
 United Farmers of Manitoba, 103  
 United Farmers of Ontario, 37, 61  
 United Grain Growers Limited, 34, 52, 103, 112, 122, 127, 128, 134, 136, 137-9, 140, 147, 157, 172  
 United States Grain Corporation, 23, 121
- VANCOUVER, 156  
 Vancouver Board of Trade, 155  
 Van Horne, William, 39-40
- WARNER, D. W., 32, 107, 110  
 Weir, James, 50, 56, 59, 68, 71, 74, 79, 80, 81, 86, 101, 155  
 Western Australian Farmers' Wheat Pool, 166  
*Western Independent*, 88, 93  
 Wetaskiwin, 183  
 Wheat marketing: production of wheat, 20, 120; importance of transportation, 21, 27; agricultural prices, 22, 23-4; government influence on, 22; expansion in Alberta, 23; prices in Alberta, 24, 25; grading, 24; role of freight rates, 29; position in Alberta, 34; costs of production, 36; importance in Alberta, 38; government regulation, 41; transportation, 42; farm prices, 42, 120; fixing prices during World War I, 54-5; economic difficulties, 95; demand for fixed price, 123-4; criticism of Wheat Pool method, 128-9; prices, 130; Dunning voluntary pool, 134; voluntary pool proposed by United Grain Growers, 139; success of co-operative method, 152; influence of Panama Canal, 155; proposed wheat export tax, 163-4; international Pool move-

ment, 164-6; international marketing co-operation, 167-8; struggle over compulsory pooling, 194; reform of Board of Grain Commissioners, 197-9; agricultural depression, 200-1; support of provincial wheat pools by provincial government, 202; collapse of prices, 204; movement for re-establishment of Wheat Board, 206; loyalty of farmers to co-operative principle, 207

White, Thomas, 44, 75

Winnipeg Grain Exchange, 33-4, 120, 122, 126, 140, 147, 193, 205

Wood, Henry Wise: membership in farmers' association, 3, 11, 13, 14; appearance, 4; influence upon farmers, 4-5, 15, 17, 25, 34; comparison with Abraham Lincoln, 4, 7; recreation, 5; education, 5, 9; character, 5-7, 9; visit to Japan, 6; family background, 7 ff.; religious ideals, 9; marriage to Etta Leora Cook, 9; Missouri background, 10-12; visit to Canada, 11; agrarian political action, 12, 16; Alberta home, 13, 19, 24; elected district director, U.F.A., 15; elected president of U.F.A., 15; theory of co-operation, 16; president of U.F.A., 16; agrarian organization, 17; agricultural activities, 18; ideas on organization, 33; improvement of U.F.A. organization, 48; 1917 U.F.A. convention, 52; value of co-operation, 52-3; member of Board of Grain Supervisors, 53-5; attitude towards provincial politics, 56; formation of Union government, 58; position in 1917 federal election, 59-60; influence in U.F.A., 62; philosophy of group co-operation, 62-6; influence on agrarian political action in Al-

berta, 66-7, 74, 88, 91, 98; presidential addresses, 1918, p. 68; 1919, p. 73; 1921, p. 96; 1923, p. 171; support of fixed wheat price in 1918, 68-9; view on military exemptions, 70; opposes present tariff system, 71; criticism of, 74-5, 79, 86, 87, 88, 90, 123, 173, 210; role in Assiniboia by-elections, 77; opposition to union with Non-Partisan League, 78; urges importance of group action, 79-80; vindication of views at Macleod convention, 80; victory at East-West Calgary convention, 82; hostility to amalgamation with Liberal party, 82; leadership of political action, 83; role in Cochrane by-election, 85; political ability, 89; 1920 U.F.A. convention, 89-90; influence on agrarian movement, 92, 102-3; political importance of U.F.A., 92-3; ideas on political action, 93; attack on Board of Railway Commissioners, 95; opposition to tariff protection, 95-6; influence in Medicine Hat by-election, 97-9; role in Alberta provincial election, 99-101; offer of provincial premiership, 101-2; attitude towards provincial administration, 102; conflict with Crerar over political action, 104-5; refusal to accept Crerar's leadership, 106; influence in Progressive Party campaign, 106-8; extent of U.F.A. victory, 108; opposition to political fusion, 109; consolidation of control over U.F.A., 110; opposition to Liberal-Progressive alliance, 111-15; attitude towards Crerar's resignation, 112; support of "Ginger Group," 117; support of group action, 118; continuation of U.F.A. in politics, 119; membership on Canadian Wheat Board, 122; op-

position to fixed wheat prices, 122-3; support of government aid in wheat marketing, 123; defends Canadian Wheat Board, 124; support of Canadian Wheat Board, 125, 131-2, 135-6; support of Wheat Pool, 127-9, 149, 158; criticism of Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, 128; refusal to serve as Chairman of Canadian Wheat Board, 134; criticized Dunning Plan, 135; position regarding Canadian Wheat Board, 137-8; interest in Canadian Wheat Pool, 140; advocacy of Alberta Wheat Pool, 141; belief in Alberta Wheat Pool, for 1923, 142-3; co-operation with Sapiro in Alberta, 143; importance of establishment of Alberta Wheat Pool, 144-5; influence on Alberta Wheat Pool policy, 147; appeal for support of Alberta Wheat Pool, 148-9; vice-president Canadian Wheat Pool, 151-2; opposition to Sapiro, 152; belief in Wheat Pool methods, 152-3; Pool marketing problems, 153; co-operation between U.F.A. and Alberta Wheat Pool, 154-5; rejection of Sapiro's criticism, 155; country elevator question, 156; influence over Alberta Wheat Pool movement, 159; conflict with McPhail on marketing policy, 160; support of Campbell amendment, 161; opposes wheat export tax, 163-4; value of international wheat marketing organization, 165; visit to Australia, 166; advocates development of co-operative marketing, 167; role in Canadian Wheat Pool movement, 168-9; influence on Alberta agrarian movement, 170-1; essential conservatism, 171; main-

tains leadership of U.F.A., 173-4; withdrawal from U.F.A. activities, 174; influence maintained in U.F.A., 176; support of Alberta government, 177-8; role in Alberta premiership crisis, 178-9; support of Brownlee, 180; influence in federal politics, 181; support of independent farmers' movement in 1925, 183; continued political influence, 184; favours political independence for U.F.A., 186; retirement from federal politics, 189; contribution to federal politics, 189-90; recognition of influence, 191; receives honorary degree, 191; popularity, 192, 210; belief in Wheat Pool ideal, 193; compulsory pooling, 194-7; renewed conflict with Sapiro, 194-7; support of reform of Board of Grain Commissioners, 198-9; relationship with McPhail, 199-200; helps formulate pool policy, 200; confidence in pool methods, 203-4; return to pool operations on provincial level, 205; favours wheat board, 206; place in Wheat Pool movement, 207-8; retirement from active leadership, 209; support of U.F.A. provincial government, 211-12; decline of influence in U.F.A., 214-15; retirement from U.F.A., 215; granted C.M.G., 215; retirement from Alberta Wheat Pool, 216; death of wife, 216; death, 216; estimate of his career, 217

Wood, James Perry, 11

Wood, John Oliver, 7-9

Woodbridge, P. P., 31, 47

Woods, J. H., 196

Woodsworth, J. S., 115

World War (first), 20, 22, 25, 34, 36, 42





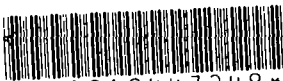


# DATE DUE SLIP

DUE C	FEB 08 '83	MAR 27 1996
DUE C	FEB 21 '83	APR 26 RETURN
DUE C	MAR 04 '83	
	MAR 03 RETURN	
	MAR 22 '89	
DUE C	FEB 15 '90	
	FEB 28 RETURN	
DUE C	DEC 07 1991	
	NOV 25 RETURN	
	NOV 28 RETURN	
F255		
CIRC	JAN 27 1992	

HD 1790 A3 W8 C-10  
ROLPH WILLIAM KIRBY 1917-1953  
HENRY WISE WOOD OF ALBERTA/

39620724 ~~ACC~~ HSS



\*000012447348\*

HD 1790 A3 W8 C.10  
Rolph, William Kirby, 1917-1953.  
Henry Wise Wood of Alberta /

39620724 UNDGR

UNDERGRADUATE LIBRARY

